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The Riverside Literature Series

THE FAERIE QUEENE

BOOK ONE

BY

EDMUND SPENSER

EDITED, WITH INTRODUCTION, NOTES AND SUGGESTIONS FOR STUDY

BY

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R. L. S. 160

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CAMBRIDGE . MASSACHUSETTS

U . S . A

PREFACE

THIS edition of the first book of *The Faerie Queene* has been prepared for use in courses in the history of English literature where the aim in studying Spenser is, first, to lead students, persuasively, to an enjoyment of his poetry; and, second, to give them that initial training in the study of literature which shall develop their intellectual independence. In order to further these ends, the notes have been made very brief. All attempt to identify Spenser's obligations to other authors, or to relate *The Faerie Queene* to his other works, has been omitted, in the belief that these copious references overwhelm young readers with a feeling that Spenser is a poet to be read chiefly by the erudite. Close study of sources may, without great loss, be left for more advanced students. References to the great pagan divinities, Apollo, Jove, Diana, etc., will not be explained, nor will those common archaic words be translated, such as perchance, eek, etc., which should be familiar to every student of literature. Students are expected to turn to the unabridged dictionary for interpretation of such poetic diction. In the explanation of archaic words the intention has been to give those only which possess intrinsic difficulty for the student, while comment on many has been neglected simply for the sake of challenging, as far as possible, the imagination, the reason, and the power of observation. Many words

that are in modern use are hidden under archaic spelling, and, in order to identify these, students are advised to try the following experiments, taking pains always to pronounce the word aloud, for in all study of language we must think of the spoken and not of the written form. 1. Pronounce all the syllables, as in leke = leaky. 2. Shorten or lengthen the vowels in turn. 3. Soften or harden c, g, ch. 4. Remove prefixes y, be, for, which we no longer use. 5. Transpose letters, as in crudled = curdled. 6. Omit initial h, as in heben = ebon. 7. Substitute one vowel for another, as in lilled = lolled. The burden, also, of interpreting the allegory is thrown upon the student, who, aided by the table of allegories and by certain questions proposed, ought to be able to understand the most important points of Spenser's ethical teaching in the first book. The essential thing is that students of the twentieth century should not have the researches of three hundred years thrust before them, but should be allowed the pleasure of meeting Spenser with a freshness of appreciation allied as closely as possible to that of the young Elizabethans.

M. H. S.

Wellesley, Mass.,
December, 1904.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF SPENSER

THE circumstances of Spenser's early life are not recorded, and we can, at best, only conjecture what was his native endowment and what the shaping influences that surrounded him. The Lancashire Spensers, from whom he was descended, were people comfortably prosperous and well connected, but it is believed that Spenser's father was unfortunate, and that the boyhood of the poet was familiar with poverty. The year of his birth is uncertain, the date usually accepted being 1552. The place was that part of London called East Smithfield, outside the city walls, where were green meadows and country lanes. The love of nature which characterizes all of Spenser's poetry was doubtless developed in this semi-rustic birthplace and preceded his love for books.

In 1561, probably, he was a pupil at the newly established Merchant Taylors' School, in London, where he studied to some purpose, forming an acquaintance with Greek and Latin, and with French and Italian as well, if the supposition is correct that he was author of certain translations from Petrarch and from Bellay published in 1569 by John Vander Noodt.

From London Spenser went to Pembroke Hall, Cambridge University, and was registered in 1569 as a sizar, a title given to poor students who waited at table. His university life was not eventful; he made enduring friendships with Edward Kirke and Gabriel

Harvey, he listened to the various discussions, theological, political, literary, which echoed about Cambridge, and he read widely, proving himself a serious and able student, with a strong preference for classical literature. Seven years were spent at the university, years in which the beauty of tower and hall beside the slow-flowing river Cam must have impressed the young man as vividly as it did two later poets, Milton and Wordsworth. The degree of Bachelor of Arts was taken in 1573, the degree of Master of Arts in 1576, and then Spenser left Cambridge, disappointed, it may be, that he did not receive a fellowship that would have entitled him to permanent residence at the university.

A visit of about a year, made at this time to his relatives in the north, brought Spenser a knowledge of the landscape and of the dialect of that region, and also introduced him to "Rosalind," whom he loved with a hopeless devotion recorded in *The Shepheardes Calender*. Returning to London, he was introduced to Philip Sidney, the most distinguished young man of the day, famous as scholar, writer, and courtier, who in turn presented Spenser to his father and to his uncle, Lord Leicester. Leicester, Queen Elizabeth's favorite, a man of culture and of influence, received Spenser kindly and gave him a position, with certain clerical duties, in his household. In 1579 *The Shepheardes Calender* was published. This was a pastoral poem composed of eclogues, one for each month in the year, ranging from exquisite description to serious ethical discussion. The work, dedicated to "the noble and vertuous gentleman, most worthy of all titles both of learning and of chevalrie, Maister Philip Sidney," and signed "Immerito," was received

most favorably and won instant recognition for the poet. Various literary interests claimed his attention. He had begun *The Faerie Queene*, he was contemplating the publication of numerous short poems, and he was a member of the "Areopagus," a club formed by Sidney, Sir Edward Dyer, Sir Fulke Greville, and Gabriel Harvey, for the purpose of introducing classical metres into English verse. It was at this period, perhaps, that Spenser knew his greatest happiness. Young, gifted, ambitious, he may reasonably have looked forward to years of brilliant achievement.

Three years passed under the protection of Lord Leicester, and then came an appointment as secretary to Lord Arthur Grey of Wilton, recently made Lord Deputy of Ireland. Preferment of some sort he had desired, but not that which would practically exile him from his dearest interests. From 1580 until his death Spenser lived in Ireland, making but two brief visits to London. Of the details of his life from this moment we know almost nothing. Ireland was in a state of rebellion, and was under harsh military rule so strictly enforced by Lord Grey, that he was, in 1582, recalled. In 1581 Spenser was made Clerk of the Irish Court of Chancery, a position which he held for seven years, until his election as Clerk to the Council of Munster. In 1598 his appointment as Sheriff of Cork County showed the degree of regard England had for his executive power. It may be asserted that no poet ever performed more patiently and carefully work which in its tiresome routine must have been totally uncongenial.

During the first years of residence in Ireland, Spenser lived in or near Dublin, but by 1586 he was

awarded a gift of Kilcolman Castle and 3028 acres, part of the Desmond estate, near Doneraile, Cork County. The old castle was situated on the side of a lake, to which the river Awbeg, or "Mulla," was tributary, and commanded an extensive view of the neighboring country to the far-distant hills. Here Spenser was living in 1588. The hours not employed in official tasks were spent in work on *The Faerie Queene*, doubtless bringing solace to the lonely, disappointed man, whose friends were few in that discouraged land. Special cause of grief had come in the untimely death, in 1586, of Sidney, whom Spenser lamented in *Astrophel* and in *The Ruines of Time*. Two friends, however, he had, — Lodovick Bryskett and Sir Walter Raleigh, a neighbor on the Desmond estate. It was Raleigh who listened with keen appreciation to the first books of *The Faerie Queene* and urged the author to publication, accompanying Spenser on that eventful journey to London in 1590. In *Colin Clout 's Come Home Again* the story of this visit is told, under the veil of the pastoral. Old friendships were renewed and old hopes were rekindled by the success of the publication of the first three books of *The Faerie Queene*. Queen Elizabeth granted him a yearly pension of £50. A publisher eagerly brought out, in the year following, a volume of minor poems, entitled *Complaints: containing sundrie small Poems of the World's Vanitie*.

Spenser's marriage with Elizabeth Boyle in 1594 was the inspiration of a series of love sonnets, *Amoretti*, and the best of his shorter poems, *Epithalamion*, the most radiant marriage ode in the English language. A second visit to London in 1596 brought about the

publication of three more books of *The Faerie Queene*, and of *Prothalamion*, another marriage hymn, in honor of two noble ladies. *A View of the Present State of Ireland*, a prose work in dialogue form, was presumably circulated in manuscript at this time.

In the midst of this literary success, while Spenser was looking forward to the completion of *The Faerie Queene*, the Irish insurgents rose in fury, and, resentful of Spenser's possession of the Desmond property, set fire to his home, from which he escaped with his wife and four children by the greatest difficulty. Dispatched to London with important diplomatic messages, Spenser a third time crossed the Irish Sea, reaching London, weary and ill, to die, January 16, 1599.

There is a tradition, for which the dramatist Ben Jonson is responsible, that the poet "died for lack of bread." No doubt Spenser was always sensitive to his isolation, and to his lack of lucrative preferment, never hesitating to express his defeated hopes; but the idea that he suffered from extreme poverty is generally discredited. He was buried in the Poets' Corner in Westminster Abbey, not far from Chaucer, his master, "well of English undefyled."

Unquestionably in the first rank of poets, Spenser has left us achievement of singular perfection if we remember that he was the first great English poet after Chaucer, writing before Shakespeare and the other famous men of the age had found their way to fame. In his best work there is buoyancy of execution, picturesque detail, and, pervading all, a finely sensitive spiritual perception.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF THE LIFE AND WORKS OF SPENSER

1552 (?). Born in London.

1561 (?). Entered Merchant Taylors' School.

1569 (?). Published translations of poems of Petrarch and of Bellay.

1569. Entered Pembroke Hall, Cambridge, as a sizar.
Made the acquaintance of Gabriel Harvey and Edward Kirke.

1573. Received degree B. A.

1576. Received degree M. A.

1576–8. Visited relatives in north of England.
Fell in love with "Rosalind."

1578. Introduced to Sir Philip Sidney.
Became inmate of Lord Leicester's house in London, with certain clerical duties. *The Faerie Queene* begun.

1579. Published *The Shepheardes Calender.*

1580. Appointed Secretary to Lord Grey, Lord Deputy of Ireland.

1581. Appointed Clerk of Irish Court of Chancery.

1582. Lord Grey recalled to England.

1586. Presented with Kilcolman Castle and estate, near Doneraile, Cork County, Ireland.

1588. Appointed Clerk to the Council of Munster.

1590. Visited London with Raleigh.
Published *The Faerie Queene*, Books I, II, III.
Granted pension of £50 by Queen Elizabeth.

1591 (?). Returned to Ireland.

1591. Published *Complaints: containing sundrie small Poems of the World's Vanitie;* and *Daphnaida.*

1594. Married Elizabeth Boyle.

1595. Published *Amoretti; Epithalamion;* and *Colin Clout 's Come Home Again.*

1595–6. Visited London. Published *The Faerie Queene,* Books

IV, V, VI; *Prothalamion; A View of the Present State of Ireland* (prose, published 1633), probably circulated in manuscript.

1598. Appointed Sheriff of Cork. Uprising of the Irish. Kilcolman Castle burned by rebels.

Spenser sent to London by the President of Munster.

1599. January 16, died in London. Buried in Westminster Abbey.

INTRODUCTION TO THE FAERIE QUEENE

The Shepheardes Calender, published in 1579, won for Spenser an audience who, delighting in his poetic freshness and animation, looked forward eagerly to other achievements by him in the future. When the first three books of *The Faerie Queene* were published, in 1590, Elizabethan England welcomed the poem with warmest enthusiasm, lavishing upon Spenser's masterpiece unstinted praise; but none of the more tangible honors or distinctions, of which he may have dreamed, came to him. He still continued to perform the duties of rather obscure posts in Ireland, and there completed three more books of his epic, separated from the life of brilliant London, where Shakespeare, Marlowe, Bacon, Green, Lyly, and many others were fashioning their literary immortality. Exile as he was, distant from the interests and activities of the busy world, he was doubtless by this very loneliness stimulated to a deeper self-expression than might have been his had he lived in the midst of gayety and ease. Thus his poem is essentially the product of "retired leisure," bearing the unmistakable stamp of a personality developed in solitude amid the society of dreams.

Sir Walter Raleigh, Spenser's neighbor, persuaded him to take to London the three books which, though probably begun in England, had received their final

shape in Ireland, and it was to Raleigh that Spenser wrote his letter explaining his intention in the work. He stated frankly that his purpose was didactic and defended, at some length, his choice of allegory. According to his plan there were to be twelve books of *The Faerie Queene*, embodying the twelve private moral virtues in the persons of twelve several knights. Only six books were completed, which are as follows: Book I, contayning the Legend of the Knight of the Red Crosse, or of Holinesse; Book II, contayning the Legend of Sir Guyon, or of Temperance; Book III, contayning the Legend of Britomartis, or of Chastity; Book IV, contayning the Legend of Cambel and Triamond, or of Friendship; Book V, contayning the Legend of Artegall, or of Justice; Book VI, contayning the Legend of Sir Calidore, or of Courtesie; two cantos of Mutabilitie, which appear to be part of the Legend of Constancie.

The allegory is in the form of a romance of chivalry, a species of literature that enjoyed unbounded popularity in Europe for more than four centuries. *King Horn* (about 1240) and *Guy of Warwick* (early fourteenth century) are representative of the earliest form of English romance, while numerous examples of later favorites are to be found, concerned chiefly with four great cycles of story, — the Charlemagne Cycle, dealing with legends of Charlemagne and the Twelve Peers; the Alexander Cycle, dealing with legends of Alexander of Macedon; the Troy Cycle, dealing with legends connected with the Siege of Troy; and the Arthur Cycle, dealing with legends of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table. Sir Thomas Malory's *Le Morte Darthur* (1470) is the best Eng-

lish representative of the mediæval romance of chivalry, revealing vividly the practices and the ideals of chivalry. In this prose tale King Arthur and his knights pass back and forth on their various quests and at the last forsake their gallant warfare to search for the Holy Grail. Spenser, fascinated and beguiled by much reading of old romance, and inspired to authorship on his own part by the study of recent Italian romances, Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso* (1516) and Tasso's *Gerusalemme Liberata* (1581), chose this most popular of forms to carry his didactic message, appealing thus to a well-known preference in the taste of the period. He followed his masters closely, taking the conventional point of view, the conventional incidents based upon the conflicts of love and religion with other forces chiefly supernatural or pagan.

Unfortunately, to the majority of our day and generation the romance of chivalry has only a passing appeal. We have not inherited, as did the Elizabethans, the traditions of chivalry, together with an ardent taste for all literature in which it was represented, and consequently many read *The Faerie Queene* without delight, feeling, not the glamour of romance, but the intolerable weight of allegory. We should learn to dwell more upon the imaginative and picturesque qualities, and less upon the purely ethical element, in order to prevent this poetic treasure from being consigned to oblivion. That it is a treasure possessing high values no one can deny; and aside from all considerations of style it bears a strong historic suggestiveness.

The most obvious historic element is in the picture of the Middle Ages painted by Spenser, with a

thorough sympathy that reveals the gorgeousness, the superstition, the bravery, and the beauty of the mediæval world. The allegory, in which we see the struggle for Holiness, the conflict between the Reformed Church and the Papacy, is important as introduction to the religious Reformation that had recently thrown Europe into profound agitation, and had in England, under the leadership of Henry VIII, reached its boldest development. Moreover, the lesson of self-restraint and of perpetual vigilance reveals more than a hint of the growing Puritanism of Spenser's day. Throughout the poem are constant signs of the Renaissance, the great humanistic movement which reached its climax in the sixteenth century. The Fall of Constantinople, in 1453, and its occupation by the Turks, was followed by the dispersion of Greek scholars, who fled to the west and especially to Italy, where there was no lack of ardent pupils eager to know the classic world. With this revival of learning, aided by the wide circulation of books by means of the newly-invented printing-press (about 1440), was an attendant quickening of spirit and appreciation of all those things which go to perfect human culture. Poetry, painting, sculpture, architecture, law, religion, — all proved to be subjects of abounding interest to the educated world; everything that had touched human civilization was studied earnestly, and intellectual life was born anew, as well as spiritual zeal for truth and beauty.

Spenser, imbued by his university training with the scholarship of the age, was a fitting exponent of the love of learning and of the desire for finer intellectual ideals and more complete knowledge of beauty,

physical as well as spiritual. His classicism is marked by his familiarity with the works of Homer, Virgil, Ovid, and other Latin and Greek writers whom he could read in the original, and by his pleasure in the myths and legends of the pagan world. His learning appears copiously in his references to the history and mythology of the past, and in his general system of ethics based upon a delighted study of Aristotle and Plato and mediæval theologians. The older English poets, Chaucer, Langland, Gower, Hawes, Dunbar, Sackville, were all his friends, and his first-hand knowledge of French and of Italian writers was of constant service to him. Other manifestations of the Renaissance are to be noted in his strange confusion of pagan and Christian, a confusion that has persisted through succeeding centuries in the works of other English poets. The love of experiment appears in his shaping of an entirely new verse-form, the Spenserian stanza, exquisitely melodious. Of Spenser's passion for beauty, every canto testifies. Joy in the external world which he loved and rendered with fitting vividness is associated with the Renaissance, and, too, his worship of spiritual fairness as represented in high thoughts.

In this study of Spenser's indebtedness to the spirit of the age, we must not overlook the facts of his isolation and the consequent development of a peculiarly individual poetic personality. While Shakespeare and the whole school of dramatists of the epoch were picturing life in its intricacies and diversities, Spenser, removed from the flush and inspiration of the Elizabethan world, with its ready wit, its brave self-searching, its high endeavor, was acquainted with a race plunged in poverty and wretchedness, whose tur-

bulent temper served to exaggerate his sense of the need of militant spirituality, and also to drive him back to by-gone times for his rest and refreshment. Contact with minds defrauded of their share in the beauty of life produced in Spenser an accentuated gravity of thought and possibly dwarfed what was, at best, only a faint perception of humor. The solitary man is seldom humorous. "Sage and serious Spenser" Milton calls him, perhaps the best description we can have. Nobility of thought and feeling, imaginative vigor, fastidious taste in the execution of his work, especially in his care for subdued melody of verse, all these prove Spenser's lasting claim upon our admiration. The only significant charge to be brought against him is that, although he knew well the maladies of the human spirit, he had little sense of participation in them and scant sympathy for error. If for any reason his teaching fails, it is because he lacks the Shakespearian power of sharing the sting of repentance.

Finally, *The Faerie Queene* merits long attention as offering many suggestions to the student of comparative literature, who will find abundant material for the investigation of literary influence in Spenser's use of other works and in the later imitations of Spenser himself. Charles Lamb has called Spenser "The Poet's Poet." Certainly this is a name well won if we think of such men as Phineas Fletcher, William Browne, Milton, Dryden, Pope, Thomson, Shenstone, Beattie, Burns, Coleridge, Campbell, Southey, Keats, Shelley, and Byron, all poets of more or less renown, who have fallen under the spell of his eloquent idealism.

TO

THE MOST HIGH, MIGHTIE, AND MAGNIFICENT

EMPRESSE,

RENOWMED FOR PIETIE, VERTVE, AND ALL GRATIOVS GOVERNMENT,

ELIZABETH,

BY THE GRACE OF GOD,

Qveene of England, Fravnce, and Ireland, and of Virginia,
Defendovr of the Faith, &c.

HER MOST HVMBLE SERVAVNT

EDMVND SPENSER,

DOTH, IN ALL HVMILITIE,

DEDICATE, PRESENT, AND CONSECRATE

THESE HIS LABOVRS,

TO LIVE WITH THE ETERNITIE OF HER FAME.[1]

---

[1] This is the Dedication to the edition of 1596. In the first edition of 1590 the Dedication was as follows: To the most Mightie and Magnificent Empresse Elizabeth, by the Grace of God Qveene of England, France and Ireland, Defender of the Faith &c.

Her most humble Seruant:
ED. SPENSER.

A LETTER OF THE AUTHORS,

EXPOUNDING HIS WHOLE INTENTION IN THE COURSE OF THIS WORKE: WHICH, FOR THAT IT GIVETH GREAT LIGHT TO THE READER, FOR THE BETTER UNDERSTANDING IS HEREUNTO ANNEXED.

TO THE RIGHT NOBLE AND VALOROUS

SIR WALTER RALEIGH, KNIGHT,

LORD WARDEIN OF THE STANNERYES, AND HER MAIESTIES LIEFETENAUNT OF THE COUNTY OF CORNEWAYLL.

SIR, knowing how doubtfully all Allegories may be construed, and this booke of mine, which I have entituled the Faery Queene, being a continued Allegory, or darke conceit, I haue thought good, as well for avoyding of gealous opinions and misconstructions, as also for your better light in reading thereof, (being so by you commanded,) to discover unto you the general intention and meaning, which in the whole course thereof I have fashioned, without expressing of any particular purposes, or by accidents, therein occasioned. The generall end therefore of all the booke is to fashion a gentleman or noble person in vertuous and gentle discipline: Which for that I conceived shoulde be most plausible and pleasing, being coloured with an historicall fiction, the which the most part of men delight to read, rather for variety of matter then for profite of the ensample, I chose the historye of King Arthure, as most fitte for the excellency of his person, being made famous by many mens former workes, and also furthest from the daunger of envy, and suspition of present time. In which I have followed all the antique Poets historicall; first Homere, who in the Persons of Agamemnon and Ulysses hath ensampled a good governour and a vertuous man, the one in his Ilias, the other in his Odysseis: then Virgil, whose like intention was to doe in the person of Aeneas: after him Ariosto comprised them both in his Orlando: and lately

Tasso dissevered them againe, and formed both parts in two persons, namely that part which they in Philosophy call Ethice, or vertues of a private man, coloured in his Rinaldo ; the other named Politice in his Godfredo. By ensample of which excellente Poets, I labour to pourtraict in Arthure, before he was king, the image of a brave knight, perfected in the twelve private morall vertues, as Aristotle hath devised ; the which is the purpose of these first twelve bookes : which if I finde to be well accepted, I may be perhaps encoraged to frame the other part of polliticke vertues in his person, after that hee came to be king.

To some, I know, this Methode will seeme displeasaunt, which had rather have good discipline delivered plainly in way of precepts, or sermoned at large, as they use, then thus clowdily enwrapped in Allegoricall devises. But such, me seeme, should be satisfide with the use of these dayes, seeing all things accounted by their showes, and nothing esteemed of, that is not delightfull and pleasing to commune sence. For this cause is Xenophon preferred before Plato, for that the one, in the exquisite depth of his judgement, formed a Commune welth, such as it should be ; but the other in the person of Cyrus, and the Persians, fashioned a governement, such as might best be : So much more profitable and gratious is doctrine by ensample, then by rule. So haue I laboured to doe in the person of Arthure : whome I conceive, after his long education by Timon, to whom he was by Merlin delivered to be brought up, so soone as he was borne of the Lady Igrayne, to have seene in a dream or vision the Faery Queen, with whose excellent beauty ravished, he awaking resolved to seeke her out ; and so being by Merlin armed, and by Timon throughly instructed, he went to seeke her forth in Faerye land. In that Faery Queene I meane glory in my generall intention, but in my particular I conceive the most excellent and glorious person of our soveraine the Queene, and her kingdome in Faery land. And yet, in some places els, I doe otherwise shadow her. For considering she beareth two persons, the one of a most royall Queene or Empresse, the other of a most vertuous and beautifull Lady, this latter part in some places I doe expresse in Belphœbe, fashioning her name according to your owne excellent conceipt of Cynthia, (Phœbe and Cynthia being both names of Diana.) So in the person of Prince Arthure I sette forth magnificence in particular ; which vertue, for that (according to Aristotle and the rest) it is the perfection of all

tl e rest, and conteineth in it them all, therefore in the whole course I mention the deedes of Arthure applyable to that vertue, which I write of in that booke. But of the xii. other vertues, I make xii. other knights the patrones, for the more variety of the history: Of which these three bookes contayn three.

The first of the knight of the Redcrosse, in whome I expresse Holynes: The seconde of Sir Guyon, in whome I sette forth Temperaunce: The third of Britomartis, a Lady Knight, in whome I picture Chastity. But, because the beginning of the whole worke seemeth abrupte, and as depending upon other antecedents, it needs that ye know the occasion of these three knights seuerall adventures. For the Methode of a Poet historical is not such, as of an Historiographer. For an Historiographer discourseth of affayres orderly as they were donne, accounting as well the times as the actions ; but a Poet thrusteth into the middest, even where it most concerneth him, and there recoursing to the thinges forepaste, and divining of thinges to come, maketh a pleasing Analysis of all.

The beginning therefore of my history, if it were to be told by an Historiographer should be the twelfth booke, which is the last ; where I devise that the Faery Queene kept her Annuall feaste xii. dayes ; uppon which xii. severall dayes, the occasions of the xii. severall adventures hapned, which, being undertaken by xii. severall knights, are in these xii. books severally handled and discoursed. The first was this. In the beginning of the feast, there presented him selfe a tall clownishe younge man, who falling before the Queene of Faries desired a boone (as the manner then was) which during that feast she might not refuse; which was that hee might have the atchievement of any adventure, which during that feaste should happen : that being graunted, he rested him on the floore, unfitte through his rusticity for a better place. Soone after entred a faire Ladye in mourning weedes, riding on a white Asse, with a dwarfe behind her leading a warlike steed, that bore the Armes of a knight, and his speare in the dwarfes hand. Shee, falling before the Queene of Faeries, complayned that her father and mother, an ancient King and Queene, had bene by an huge dragon many years shut up in a brasen Castle, who thence suffred them not to yssew ; and therefore besought the Faery Queene to assygne her some one of her knights to take on him that exployt. Presently that clownish person, upstarting, desired that adventure : whereat

the Queene much wondering, and the Lady much gainesaying, yet he earnestly importuned his desire. In the end the Lady told him, that unlesse that armour which she brought, would serve him (that is, the armour of a Christian man specified by Saint Paul, vi. Ephes.) that he could not succeed in that enterprise ; which being forthwith put upon him, with dewe furnitures thereunto, he seemed the goodliest man in al that company, and was well liked of the Lady. And eftesoones taking on him knighthood, and mounting on that straunge Courser, he went forth with her on that adventure : where beginneth the first booke, viz.

A gentle knight was pricking on the playne. &c.

The second day ther came in a Palmer, bearing an Infant with bloody hands, whose Parents he complained to have bene slayn by an Enchaunteresse called Acrasia ; and therfore craved of the Faery Queene, to appoint him some knight to performe that adventure ; which being assigned to Sir Guyon, he presently went forth with that same Palmer : which is the beginning of the second booke, and the whole subject thereof. The third day there came in a Groome, who complained before the Faery Queene, that a vile Enchaunter, called Busirane, had in hand a most faire Lady, called Amoretta, whom he kept in most grievous torment, because she would not yield him the pleasure of her body. Whereupon Sir Scudamour, the lover of that Lady, presently tooke on him that adventure. But being vnable to performe it by reason of the hard Enchauntments, after long sorrow, in the end met with Britomartis, who succoured him, and reskewed his loue.

But by occasion hereof many other adventures are intermedled ; but rather as Accidents then intendments : As the love of Britomart, the overthrow of Marinell, the misery of Florimell, the vertuousnes of Belphœbe, the lasciviousnes of Hellenora, and many the like.

Thus much, Sir, I have briefly overronne to direct your understanding to the wel-head of the History ; that from thence gathering the whole intention of the conceit, ye may as in a handfull gripe al the discourse, which otherwise may happily seeme tedious and confused. So, humbly craving the continuance of your honorable favour towards me, and th' eternall establishment of your happines, I humbly take leave.

23. Ianuary 1589,

Yours most humbly affectionate,

Ed. Spenser.

THE RED CROSS KNIGHT

From the Third Edition, 1598, of Spenser's Faerie Queene

THE FIRST BOOK

OF

THE FAERIE QUEENE

CONTAYNING THE LEGEND OF THE KNIGHT OF THE RED CROSSE, OR OF HOLINESSE

I

Lo! I, the man whose Muse whylome [1] did maske,
As time her taught, in lowly Shephards weeds,[2]
Am now enforst, a farre unfitter taske,
For trumpets sterne to chaunge mine Oaten reeds,
And sing of Knights and Ladies gentle deeds;
Whose praises having slept in silence long,
Me, all too meane, the sacred Muse areeds [3]
To blazon broade emongst her learned throng:
Fierce warres and faithful loves shall moralize my song.

II

Helpe then, O holy virgin! chiefe of nyne,[4]
Thy weaker Novice to performe thy will;
Lay forth out of thine everlasting scryne [5]
The antique rolles, which there lye hidden still,

[1] **whylome**, formerly.

[2] **Shephards weeds**, a reference to Spenser's pastoral *The Shepheardes Calender* **Weeds**, garments.

[3] **areeds**, appoints.

[4] **chiefe of nyne**, Clio, the Muse of history.

[5] **scryne**, desk.

Of Faerie knights, and fayrest Tanaquill,[1]
Whom that most noble Briton Prince[2] so long
Sought through the world, and suffered so much ill,
That I must rue his undeserved wrong:
O, helpe thou my weake wit, and snarpen my dull tong!

III

And thou, most dreaded impe[3] of highest Jove,
Faire Venus sonne, that with thy cruell dart
At that good knight so cunningly didst rove,
That glorious fire it kindled in his hart;
Lay now thy deadly Heben bowe apart,
And with thy mother mylde come to mine ayde;
Come, both; and with you bring triumphant Mart,
In loves and gentle jollities arraid,
After his murdrous spoyles and bloudie rage allayd.

IV

And with them eke, O Goddesse heavenly bright!
Mirrour of grace and Majestie divine,
Great Ladie of the greatest Isle, whose light
Like Phœbus lampe throughout the world doth shine,
Shed thy faire beames into my feeble eyne,
And raise my thoughtes, too humble and too vile,
To thinke of that true glorious type of thine,
The argument of mine afflicted stile:[4]
The which to heare vouchsafe, O dearest dread, a-while!

[1] **Tanaquill**, Elizabeth.
[2] **Prince**, Arthur.
[3] **impe**, child.
[4] **afflicted stile**, humble **pen**.

CANTO I

The Patrone of true Holinesse
Foule Errour doth defeate:
Hypocrisie, him to entrappe,
Doth to his home entreate.

I

A GENTLE Knight was pricking[1] on the plaine,
Ycladd in mightie armes and silver shielde,
Wherein old dints of deepe woundes did remaine,
The cruell markes of many' a bloody fielde;
Yet armes till that time did he never wield.
His angry steede did chide his foming bitt,
As much disdayning to the curbe to yield:
Full jolly[2] knight he seemd, and faire did sitt,
As one for knightly giusts[3] and fierce encounters fitt.

II

And on his brest a bloodie Crosse he bore,
The deare remembrance of his dying Lord,
For whose sweete sake that glorious badge he wore,
And dead, as living, ever him ador'd:
Upon his shield the like was also scor'd,
For soveraine hope which in his helpe he had.
Right faithfull true he was in deede and word,
But of his cheere[4] did seeme too solemne sad;
Yet nothing did he dread, but ever was ydrad.

[1] **pricking**, riding fast = with the spur.
[2] **jolly**, handsome.
[3] **giusts**. A joust was a mock combat between two knights.
[4] **cheere**, countenance.

III

Upon a great adventure he was bond,
That greatest Gloriana to him gave,
(That greatest Glorious Queene of Faery lond)
To winne him worshippe, and her grace to have,
Which of all earthly thinges he most did crave:
And ever as he rode his hart did earne [1]
To prove his puissance in battell brave
Upon his foe, and his new force to learne,
Upon his foe, a Dragon horrible and stearne.

IV

A lovely Ladie rode him faire beside,
Upon a lowly Asse more white then snow,
Yet she much whiter; but the same did hide
Under a vele, that wimpled [2] was full low;
And over all a blacke stole [3] shee did throw:
As one that inly mournd, so was she sad,
And heavie sate upon her palfrey slow;
Seemed in heart some hidden care she had,
And by her, in a line, a milkewhite lambe she lad.

V

So pure and innocent, as that same lambe,
She was in life and every vertuous lore;
And by descent from Royall lynage came
Of ancient Kinges and Queenes, that had of yore
Their scepters stretcht from East to Westerne shore,
And all the world in their subjection held;
Till that infernall feend with foule uprore

[1] earne, yearn.
[2] wimpled, drawn into folds.
[3] stole, a long robe.

Forwasted all their land, and them expeld;
Whom to avenge she had this Knight from far compeld.

VI

Behind her farre away a Dwarfe did lag,
That lasie seemd, in being ever last,
Or wearied with bearing of her bag
Of needments at his backe. Thus as they past,
The day with cloudes was suddeine overcast,
And angry Jove an hideous storme of raine
Did poure into his Lemans [1] lap so fast,
That everie wight to shrowd it did constrain;
And this faire couple eke to shroud themselves were fain.

VII

Enforst to seeke some covert nigh at hand,
A shadie grove not farr away they spide,
That promist ayde the tempest to withstand;
Whose loftie trees, yclad with sommers pride,
Did spred so broad, that heavens light did hide,
Not perceable with power of any starr:
And all within were pathes and alleies wide,
With footing worne, and leading inward farr.
Faire harbour that them seems, so in they entred ar.

VIII

And foorth they passe, with pleasure forward led,
Joying to heare the birdes sweete harmony,
Which, therein shrouded from the tempest dred,
Seemd in their song to scorne the cruell sky.
Much can they praise the trees so straight and hy,

[1] **Leman**, lady-love, or, in some cases, lover.

The sayling Pine; the Cedar proud and tall;
The vine-propp Elme; the Poplar never dry;
The builder Oake, sole king of forrests all;
The Aspine good for staves; the Cypresse funerall;

IX

The Laurell, meed of mightie Conquerours
And Poets sage; the Firre that weepeth still:
The Willow, worne of forlorne Paramours;
The Eugh, obedient to the benders will;
The Birch for shaftes; the Sallow for the mill;
The Mirrhe sweete-bleeding in the bitter wound;
The warlike Beech; the Ash for nothing ill;
The fruitfull Olive; and the Platane round;
The carver Holme; the Maple seeldom inward sound.

X

Led with delight, they thus beguile the way,
Untill the blustring storme is overblowne;
When, weening[1] to returne whence they did stray,
They cannot finde that path, which first was showne,
But wander too and fro in waies unknowne,
Furthest from end then, when they neerest weene,
That makes them doubt their wits be not their owne:
So many pathes, so many turnings seene,
That which of them to take in diverse doubt they been.

XI

At last resolving forward still to fare,
Till that some end they finde, or in or out,
That path they take that beaten seemd most bare,
And like to lead the labyrinth about;

[1] **weening**, thinking, supposing.

Which when by tract they hunted had throughout,
At length it brought them to a hollowe cave
Amid the thickest woods. The Champion stout
Eftsoones dismounted from his courser brave,
And to the Dwarfe a while his needlesse spere he gave.

XII

'Be well aware,' quoth then that Ladie milde,
Least suddaine mischiefe ye too rash provoke:
The danger hid, the place unknowne and wilde,
Breedes dreadfull doubts. Oft fire is without smoke,
And perill without show: therefore your stroke,
Sir Knight, with-hold, till further tryall made.'
'Ah Ladie,' (sayd he) 'shame were to revoke
The forward footing for an hidden shade:
Vertue gives her selfe light through darknesse for to wade.'

XIII

'Yea but' (quoth she) 'the perill of this place
I better wot then you: though nowe too late
To wish you backe returne with foule disgrace,
Yet wisedome warnes, whilest foot is in the gate,
To stay the steppe, ere forced to retrate.
This is the wandring wood, this *Errours* den,
A monster vile, whom God and man does hate:
Therefore I read[1] beware.' 'Fly, fly!' (quoth then
The fearefull Dwarfe) 'this is no place for living men.'

XIV

But, full of fire and greedy hardiment,
The youthfull Knight could not for ought be staide;

[1] read, advise.

But forth unto the darksom hole he went,
And looked in: his glistring armoor made
A litle glooming light, much like a shade;
By which he saw the ugly monster plaine,
Halfe like a serpent horribly displaide,
But th'other halfe did womans shape retaine,
Most lothsom, filthie, foule, and full of vile disdaine.

XV

And, as she lay upon the durtie ground,
Her huge long taile her den all overspred,
Yet was in knots and many boughtes[1] upwound,
Pointed with mortall sting. Of her there bred
A thousand yong ones, which she dayly fed,
Sucking upon her poisnous dugs; each one
Of sundrie shapes, yet all ill-favored:
Soone as that uncouth light upon them shone,
Into her mouth they crept, and suddain all were gone.

XVI

Their dam upstart out of her den effraide,
And rushed forth, hurling her hideous taile
About her cursed head; whose folds displaid
Were stretcht now forth at length without entraile.[2]
She lookt about, and seeing one in mayle,
Armed to point, sought backe to turne againe;
For light she hated as the deadly bale,
Ay wont in desert darknes to remaine,
Where plain none might her see, nor she see any plaine.

[1] boughtes, folds.
[2] without entraile, without coiling.

XVII

Which when the valiant Elfe perceiv'd, he lept
As Lyon fierce upon the flying pray,
And with his trenchand blade her boldly kept
From turning backe, and forced her to stay:
Therewith enrag'd she loudly gan to bray,
And turning fierce her speckled taile advaunst,
Threatning her angrie sting, him to dismay;
Who, nought aghast, his mightie hand enhaunst:[1]
The stroke down from her head unto her shoulder glaunst.

XVIII

Much daunted with that dint her sence was dazd;
Yet kindling rage her selfe she gathered round,
And all attonce her beastly bodie raizd
With doubled forces high above the ground:
Tho, wrapping up her wrethed sterne arownd,
Lept fierce upon his shield, and her huge traine
All suddenly about his body wound,
That hand or foot to stirr he strove in vaine.
God helpe the man so wrapt in Errours endlesse traine![2]

XIX

His Lady, sad to see his sore constraint,
Cride out, 'Now, now, Sir knight, shew what ye bee;
Add faith unto your force, and be not faint;
Strangle her, els she sure will strangle thee.'
That when he heard, in great perplexitie,
His gall did grate[3] for griefe and high disdaine;
And, knitting all his force, got one hand free,

[1] enhaunst, lifted up.
[2] Qy: *chaine?*
[3] gall did grate, anger was stirred.

Wherewith he grypt her gorge with so great paine,
That soone to loose her wicked bands did her constraine.

XX

Therewith she spewd out of her filthie maw
A floud of poyson horrible and blacke,
Full of great lumps of flesh and gobbets raw,
Which stunck so vildly, that it forst him slacke
His grasping hold, and from her turne him backe.
Her vomit full of bookes and papers was,
With loathly frogs and toades, which eyes did lacke,
And creeping sought way in the weedy gras:
Her filthie parbreake all the place defiled has.

XXI

As when old father Nilus gins to swell
With timely pride above the Aegyptian vale
His fattie waves doe fertile slime outwell,
And overflow each plaine and lowly dale:
But, when his later spring gins to avale,[1]
Huge heapes of mudd he leaves, wherin there breed
Ten thousand kindes of creatures, partly male
And partly femall, of his fruitful seed;
Such ugly monstrous shapes elswher may no man reed.[2]

XXII

The same so sore annoyed has the knight,
That, welnigh choked with the deadly stinke,
His forces faile, ne can no lenger fight
Whose corage when the feend perceivd to shrinke,
She poured forth out of her hellish sinke
Her fruitfull cursed spawne of serpents small,
Deformed monsters, fowle, and blacke as inke,

[1] avale, abate. [2] reed, perceive.

Which swarming all about his legs did crall,
And him encombred sore, but could not hurt at all.

XXIII

As gentle shepheard in sweete eventide,
When ruddy Phebus gins to welke [1] in west,
High on an hill, his flocke to vewen wide,
Markes which doe byte their hasty supper best;
A cloud of cumbrous gnattes doe him molest,
All striving to infixe their feeble stinges,
That from their noyance he no where can rest;
But with his clownish hands their tender wings
He brusheth oft, and oft doth mar their murmurings.

XXIV

Thus ill bestedd, and fearefull more of shame
Then of the certeine perill he stood in,
Halfe furious unto his foe he came,
Resolvd in minde all suddenly to win,
Or soone to lose, before he once would lin; [2]
And stroke at her with more then manly force,
That from her body, full of filthie sin,
He raft [3] her hatefull heade without remorse:
A streame of cole-black blood forth gushed from her corse.

XXV

Her scattered brood, soone as their Parent deare
They saw so rudely falling to the ground,
Groning full deadly, all with troublous feare
Gathred themselves about her body round,
Weening their wonted entrance to have found

[1] **welke**, wane.
[2] **lin**, cease.
[3] **raft**, bereft, took away violently.

At her wide mouth; but being there withstood,
They flocked all about her bleeding wound,
And sucked up their dying mothers bloud,
Making her death their life, and eke her hurt their good.

XXVI

That detestable sight him much amazde,
To see th' unkindly Impes, of heaven accurst,
Devoure their dam; on whom while so he gazd,
Having all satisfide their bloudy thurst,
Their bellies swolne he saw with fulnesse burst,
And bowels gushing forth: well worthy end
Of such as drunke her life the which them nurst!
Now needeth him no lenger labour spend,
His foes have slaine themselves, with whom he should contend.

XXVII

His Lady, seeing all that chaunst from farre,
Approcht in hast to greet his victorie;
And saide, 'Faire knight, borne under happie starre,
Who see your vanquisht foes before you lye,
Well worthie be you of that Armory,
Wherein ye have great glory wonne this day,
And proov'd your strength on a strong enimie,
Your first adventure: many such I pray,
And henceforth ever wish that like succeed it may!'

XXVIII

Then mounted he upon his Steede againe,
And with the Lady backward sought to wend.
That path he kept which beaten was most plaine,
Ne ever would to any byway bend,

But still did follow one unto the end,
The which at last out of the wood them brought.
So forward on his way (with God to frend)
He passed forth, and new adventure sought:
Long way he traveiled before he heard of ought.

XXIX

At length they chaunst to meet upon the way
An aged Sire, in long blacke weedes yclad,
His feete all bare, his beard all hoarie gray,
And by his belt his booke he hanging had:
Sober he seemde, and very sagely sad,
And to the ground his eyes were lowly bent,
Simple in shew, and voide of malice bad;
And all the way he prayed as he went,
And often knockt his brest, as one that did repent.

XXX

He faire the knight saluted, louting[1] low,
Who faire him quited, as that courteous was;
And after asked him, if he did know
Of straunge adventures, which abroad did pas,
'Ah! my dear sonne,' (quoth he) 'how should, alas!
Silly[2] old man, that lives in hidden cell,
Bidding his beades all day for his trespas,
Tydings of warre and worldly trouble tell?
With holy father sits not with such thinges to mell.[3]

XXXI

'But if of daunger, which hereby doth dwell,
And homebredd evil ye desire to heare,

[1] **louting**, bending. [2] **Silly**, simple.
[3] **mell**, meddle.

Of a straunge man I can you tidings tell,
That wasteth all this countrie, farre and neare.'
'Of such,' (saide he,) 'I chiefly doe inquere,
And shall thee well rewarde to shew the place,
In which that wicked wight his dayes doth weare;
For to all knighthood it is foule disgrace,
That such a cursed creature lives so long a space.'

XXXII

'Far hence' (quoth he) 'in wastfull wildernesse
His dwelling is, by which no living wight
May ever passe, but thorough great distresse.'
'Now,' (saide the Ladie,) 'draweth toward night,
And well I wote, that of your later fight
Ye all forwearied be; for what so strong,
But, wanting rest, will also want of might?
The Sunne, that measures heaven all day long,
At night doth baite his steedes the Ocean waves emong.

XXXIII

'Then with the Sunne take, Sir, your timely rest,
And with new day new worke at once begin:
Untroubled night, they say, gives counsell best.'
'Right well, Sir knight, ye have advised bin,'
Quoth then that aged man: 'the way to win
Is wisely to advise; now day is spent:
Therefore with me ye may take up your In
For this same night.' The knight was well content;
So with that godly father to his home they went.

XXXIV

A litle lowly Hermitage it was,
Downe in a dale, hard by a forests side,

Far from resort of people that did pas
In traveill to and froe: a litle wyde
There was an holy chappell edifyde,[1]
Wherein the Hermite dewly wont to say
His holy thinges each morne and eventyde:
Thereby a christall streame did gently play,
Which from a sacred fountaine welled forth alway.

XXXV

Arrived there, the litle house they fill,
Ne looke for entertainement where none was;
Rest is their feast, and all thinges at their will:
The noblest mind the best contentment has.
With faire discourse the evening so they pas;
For that olde man of pleasing wordes had store,
And well could file his tongue as smooth as glas:
He told of Saintes and Popes, and evermore
He strowd an *Ave-Mary* after and before.

XXXVI

The drouping night thus creepeth on them fast;
And the sad humor loading their eyeliddes,
As messenger of Morpheus [2] on them cast
Sweet slombring deaw, the which to sleep them biddes.
Unto their lodgings then his guestes he riddes:
Where when all drownd in deadly sleepe he findes,
He to his studie goes; and there amiddes
His magick bookes, and artes of sundrie kindes,
He seekes out mighty charmes to trouble sleepy minds.

[1] **edifyde**, built.
[2] **Morpheus**, God of Sleep.

XXXVII

Then choosing out few words most horrible,
(Let none them read) thereof did verses frame;
With which, and other spelles like terrible,
He bad awake blacke Plutoes griesly Dame;[1]
And cursed heven; and spake reprochful shame
Of highest God, the Lord of life and light:
A bold bad man, that dar'd to call by name
Great Gorgon,[2] prince of darknes and dead night;
At which Cocytus[3] quakes, and Styx[4] is put to flight.

XXXVIII

And forth he cald out of deepe darknes dredd
Legions of Sprights, the which, like litle flyes
Fluttring about his ever-damned hedd,
Awaite whereto their service he applyes,
To aide his friendes, or fray his enimies.
Of those he chose out two, the falsest twoo,
And fittest for to forge true-seeming lyes:
The one of them he gave a message too,
The other by him selfe staide, other worke to doo.

XXXIX

He, making speedy way through spersed[5] ayre,
And through the world of waters wide and deepe,
To Morpheus house doth hastily repaire.
Amid the bowels of the earth full steepe,
And low, where dawning day doth never peepe,

[1] **Plutoes griesly Dame**, Proserpina.
[2] **Gorgon**, Demogorgon, a mysterious divinity and magician.
[3] **Cocytus**, river of lamentation, in Hades.
[4] **Styx**, river of hate, in Hades.
[5] **spersed**, dispersed, diffused.

His dwelling is ; there Tethys[1] his wet bed
Doth ever wash, and Cynthia still doth steepe
In silver deaw his ever-drouping hed,
Whiles sad Night over him her mantle black doth spred

XL

Whose double gates he findeth locked fast,
The one faire fram'd of burnisht Yvory,
The other all with silver overcast ;
And wakeful dogges before them farre doe lye,
Watching to banish Care their enimy,
Who oft is wont to trouble gentle Sleepe.
By them the Sprite doth passe in quietly,
And unto Morpheus comes, whom drowned deepe
In drowsie fit he findes : of nothing he takes keepe.[2]

XLI

And more to lulle him in his slumber soft,
A trickling streame from high rock tumbling downe,
And ever-drizling raine upon the loft,[3]
Mixt with a murmuring winde, much like the sowne
Of swarming Bees, did cast him in a swowne.
No other noyse, nor peoples troublous cryes,
As still are wont t'annoy the walled towne,
Might there be heard ; but carelesse Quiet lyes
Wrapt in eternall silence farre from enimyes.

XLII

The Messenger approching to him spake ;
But his waste wordes retournd to him in vaine :

[1] **Tethys**, wife of Oceanus, here meaning the ocean itself.
[2] **keepe**, heed.
[3] **loft**, that which is lifted up, — a roof, probably, here.

So sound he slept, that nought mought him awake.
Then rudely he him thrust, and pusht with paine,
Whereat he gan to stretch; but he againe
Shooke him so hard, that forced him to speake.
As one then in a dreame, whose dryer braine [1]
Is tost with troubled sights and fancies weake,
He mumbled soft, but would not all his silence breake.

XLIII

The Sprite then gan more boldly him to wake,
And threatned unto him the dreaded name
Of Hecate: [2] whereat he gan to quake,
And, lifting up his lompish head, with blame
Halfe angrie asked him, for what he came.
'Hether' (quoth he,) 'me Archimago sent,
He that the stubborne Sprites can wisely tame,
He bids thee to him send for his intent
A fit false dreame, that can delude the sleepers sent.'

XLIV

The God obayde; and, calling forth straight way
A diverse Dreame out of his prison darke,
Delivered it to him, and downe did lay
His heavie head, devoide of careful carke; [4]
Whose sences all were straight benumbd and starke.
He, backe returning by the Yvorie dore,
Remounted up as light as chearefull Larke;
And on his litle winges the dreame he bore
In hast unto his Lord, where he him left afore.

[1] **dryer braine.** A dry brain was, in that age, considered less active than a moist brain.

[2] **Hecate,** a dreaded female divinity, with magic power.

[3] **sent,** sense.

[4] **carke,** grief.

XLV

Who all this while, with charmes and hidden artes,
Had made a Lady of that other Spright,
And fram'd of liquid ayre her tender partes,
So lively and so like in all mens sight,
That weaker sence it could have ravisht quight:
The maker selfe, for all his wondrous witt,
Was nigh beguiled with so goodly sight.
Her all in white he clad, and over it
Cast a black stole, most like to seeme for Una fit.

XLVI

Now, when that ydle dreame was to him brought,
Unto that Elfin knight he bad him fly,
Where he slept soundly void of evil thought,
And with false shewes abuse his fantasy,
In sort as he him schooled privily:
And that new creature, borne without her dew,[1]
Full of the makers guyle, with usage sly
He taught to imitate that Lady trew,
Whose semblance she did carrie under feigned hew.

. . . . . .

CANTO II

The guilefull great Enchanter parts
The Redcrosse Knight from Truth:
Into whose stead faire falshood steps,
And workes him woefull ruth.

I

By this the Northerne wagoner [2] had set
His sevenfold teme [3] behind the stedfast starre

[1] **dew**, due. [2] **wagoner**, the constellation Boötes.
[3] **sevenfold teme**, Charles's Wain, formed of seven stars.

7048

That was in Ocean waves yet never wet,
But firme is fixt, and sendeth light from farre
To al that in the wide deepe wandring arre ;
And chearefull Chaunticlere with his note shrill
Had warned once, that Phoebus fiery carre
In hast was climbing up the Easterne hill,
Full envious that night so long his roome did fill :

II

When those accursed messengers of hell,
That feigning dreame, and that faire-forged Spright,
Came to their wicked maister, and gan tel
Their bootelesse paines, and ill succeeding night :
Who, in all rage to see his skilfull might
Deluded so, gan threaten hellish paine,
And sad Proserpines wrath, them to affright :
But, when he saw his threatning was but vaine,
He cast about, and searcht his baleful bokes againe.

. . . . . .

VII

Now when the rosy fingred Morning faire,
Weary of aged Tithones [1] saffron bed,
Had spred her purple robe through deawy aire,
And the high hils Titan [2] discovered,
The royall virgin shooke off drousy-hed ;
And, rising forth out of her baser bowre,
Lookt for her knight, who far away was fled,
And for her dwarfe, that wont to wait each howre :
Then gan she wail and weepe to see that woeful stowre.[3]

[1] **Tithones.** Tithonus was a mortal loved by Morning, who, in bestowing upon him immortality, forgot the gift of eternal youth.
[2] **Titan,** the sun. [3] **stowre,** distress.

VIII

And after him she rode with so much speede
As her slowe beast could make ; but all in vaine,
For him so far had borne his light-foot steede,
Pricked with wrath and fiery fierce disdaine,
That him to follow was but fruitlesse paine :
Yet she her weary limbes would never rest ;
But every hil and dale, each wood and plaine,
Did search, sore grieved in her gentle brest,
He so ungently left her, whome she loved best.

IX

But subtill Archimago, when his guests
He saw divided into double parts,
And Una wandring in woods and forrests,
Th' end of his drift, he praisd his divelish arts
That had such might over true meaning harts ;
Yet rests not so, but other meanes doth make,
How he may worke unto her further smarts ;
For her he hated as the hissing snake,
And in her many troubles did most pleasure take.

X

He then devisde himselfe how to disguise ;
For by his mighty science he could take
As many formes and shapes in seeming wise,
As ever Proteus [1] to himselfe could make :
Sometime a fowle, sometime a fish in lake,
Now like a foxe, now like a dragon fell ;
That of himselfe he ofte for feare would quake,

[1] **Proteus**, a sea-god endowed with the gift of prophecy and the power of changing his form at will.

And oft would flie away. O! who can tell
The hidden powre of herbes, and might of Magick spel?

XI

But now seemde best the person to put on
Of that good knight, his late beguiled guest:
In mighty armes he was yclad anon,
And silver shield; upon his coward brest
A bloody crosse, and on his craven crest
A bounch of heares discolourd diversly.
Full jolly knight he seemde, and wel addrest;
And when he sate upon his courser free,
Saint George[1] himselfe ye would have deemed him to be.

XII

But he, the knight whose semblaunt he did beare,
The true Saint George, was wandred far away,
Still flying from his thoughts and gealous feare:
Will was his guide, and griefe led him astray.
At last him chaunst to meete upon the way
A faithlesse Sarazin,[2] all armde to point,
In whose great shield was writ with letters gay
Sans foy; full large of limbe and every joint
He was, and cared not for God or man a point.

XIII

Hee had a faire companion of his way,
A goodly Lady clad in scarlot red,
Purfled[3] with gold and pearle of rich assay;
And like a Persian mitre on her hed

[1] **Saint George**, patron saint of England, of Germany, of Venice, and of soldiers and armorers.

[2] **Sarazin**, Saracen = infidel or heathen. Same as Paynim.

[3] **Purfled**, embroidered on the edge.

Shee wore, with crowns and owches [1] garnished,
The which her lavish lovers to her gave.
Her wanton palfrey all was overspred
With tinsell trappings, woven like a wave,
Whose bridle rung with golden bels and bosses [2] brave.

XIV

With faire disport, and courting dalliaunce,
She intertainde her lover all the way;
But, when she saw the knight his speare advaunce,
She soone left off her mirth and wanton play,
And bad her knight addresse him to the fray,
His foe was nigh at hand. He, prickte with pride
And hope to winne his Ladies hearte that day,
Forth spurred fast: adowne his coursers side
The red bloud trickling staind the way, as he did ride.

XV

The knight of the Redcrosse, when him he spide
Spurring so hote with rage dispiteous,
Gan fairely couch his speare, and towards ride.
Soone meete they both, both fell and furious,
That, daunted with theyr forces hideous,
Their steeds doe stagger, and amazed stand;
And eke themselves, too rudely rigorous,
Astonied with the stroke of their owne hand,
Doe backe rebutte,[3] and ech to other yealdeth land.

XVI

As when two rams, stird with ambitious pride,
Fight for the rule of the rich fleeced flocke,

[1] **owches**, jewels.
[2] **bosses**, knobs.
[3] **rebutte**, recoil.

Their horned fronts so fierce on either side
Doe meete, that, with the terror of the shocke,
Astonied, both stand sencelesse as a blocke,
Forgetfull of the hanging victory:
So stood these twaine, unmoved as a rocke,
Both staring fierce, and holding idely
The broken reliques of their former cruelty.

XVII

The Sarazin, sore daunted with the buffe,
Snatcheth his sword, and fiercely to him flies;
Who well it wards, and quyteth cuff with cuff:
Each others equall puissaunce envies,
And through their iron sides with cruell spies[1]
Does seeke to perce; repining courage yields
No foote to foe: the flashing fier flies,
As from a forge, out of their burning shields;
And streams of purple bloud new die the verdant fields.

XVIII

'Curse on that Cross,' (quoth then the Sarazin,)
'That keepes thy body from the bitter fitt![2]
Dead long ygoe, I wote, thou haddest bin,
Had not that charme from thee forwarned itt:
But yet I warne thee now assured sitt,
And hide thy head.' Therewith upon his crest
With rigor so outrageous he smitt,
That a large share it hewd out of the rest,
And glauncing downe his shield from blame him fairly blest.[3]

[1] **cruel spies**, keen glances. [2] **fitt**, blow = death.
[3] **blest**, preserved.

XIX

Who, thereat wondrous wroth, the sleeping spark
Of native vertue gan eftsoones revive;
And at his haughty helmet making mark,
So hugely stroke, that it the steele did rive,
And cleft his head. He, tumbling downe alive,
With bloudy mouth his mother earth did kis,
Greeting his grave: his grudging[1] ghost did strive
With the fraile flesh; at last it flitted is,
Whither the soules doe fly of men that live amis.

XX

The Lady, when she saw her champion fall
Like the old ruines of a broken towre,
Staid not to waile his woefull funerall,[2]
But from him fled away with all her powre;
Who after her as hastily gan scowre,
Bidding the dwarfe with him to bring away
The Sarazins shield, signe of the conqueroure.
Her soone he overtooke, and bad to stay;
For present cause was none of dread her to dismay.

XXI

Shee turning backe, with ruefull countenaunce,
Cride, 'Mercy, mercy, Sir, vouchsafe to show
On silly Dame, subject to hard mischaunce,
And to your mighty wil!' Her humblesse low,
In so ritch weedes, and seeming glorious show,
Did much emmove his stout heroïcke heart;
And said, 'Deare dame, your suddein overthrow

[1] **grudging**, murmuring.
[2] **funerall**, death.

Much rueth me ; but now put feare apart,
And tel both who ye be, and who that tooke your part.'

XXII

Melting in teares, then gan shee thus lament.
'The wretched woman, whom unhappy howre
Hath now made thrall to your commandement,
Before that angry heavens list to lowre,
And fortune false betraide me to thy powre,
Was (O ! what now availeth that I was ?)
Borne the sole daughter of an Emperour,
He that the wide West under his rule has,
And high hath set his throne where Tiberis doth pas.

XXIII

'He, in the first flowre of my freshest age,
Betrothed me unto the onely haire
Of a most mighty king, most rich and sage :
Was never Prince so faithfull and so faire,
Was never Prince so meeke and debonaire ;
But ere my hoped day of spousall shone,
My dearest Lord fell from high honors staire
Into the hands of hys accursed fone,[1]
And cruelly was slaine ; that shall I ever mone.

XXIV

'His blessed body, spoild of lively breath,
Was afterward, I know not how, convaid,
And fro me hid : of whose most innocent death
When tidings came to mee, unhappy maid,
O, how great sorrow my sad soule assaid ![2]

[1] fone, foes.
[2] assaid, assailed.

Then forth I went his woefull corse to find,
And many yeares throughout the world I straid,
A virgin widow, whose deepe wounded mind
With love long time did languish, as the stricken hind.

XXV

'At last it chaunced this proud Sarazin
To meete me wandring; who perforce me led
With him away, but yet could never win

. . . . . .

There lies he now with foule dishonor dead,
Who, whiles he livde, was called proud Sans foy,
The eldest of three brethren; all three bred
Of one bad sire, whose youngest is Sans joy;
And twixt them both was born the bloudy bold Sans loy.

XXVI

'In this sad plight, friendlesse, unfortunate,
Now miserable I, Fidessa, dwell,
Craving of you, in pitty of my state,
To doe none ill, if please ye not doe well.'
He in great passion al this while did dwell,
More busying his quicke eies her face to view,
Then his dull eares to heare what shee did tell;
And said, 'faire lady, hart of flint would rew
The undeserved woes and sorrowes, which ye shew.

XXVII

'Henceforth in safe assuraunce may ye rest,
Having both found a new friend you to aid,
And lost an old foe that did you molest;
Better new friend then an old foe is said.'
With chaunge of chear the seeming simple maid

Let fal her eien, as shamefast, to the earth,
And yeelding soft, in that she nought gainsaid,
So forth they rode, he feining seemely merth,
And shee coy lookes: so dainty, they say, maketh derth.[1]

XXVIII

Long time they thus together traveiled;
Til, weary of their way, they came at last
Where grew two goodly trees, that faire did spred
Their armes abroad, with gray mosse overcast;
And their greene leaves, trembling with every blast,
Made a calme shadowe far in compasse round:
The fearefull shepheard, often there aghast,
Under them never sat, ne wont there sound
His mery oaten pipe, but shund th' unlucky ground.

XXIX

But this good knight, soone as he them can spie,
For the coole shade him thither hastly got:
For golden Phoebus, now ymounted hie,
From fiery wheeles of his faire chariot
Hurled his beame so scorching cruell hot,
That living creature mote it not abide;
And his new Lady it endured not.
There they alight, in hope themselves to hide
From the fierce heat, and rest their weary limbs a tide.[2]

XXX

Faire seemely pleasaunce each to other makes,
With goodly purposes, there as they sit;

[1] dainty, . . . maketh derth, a proverbial way of saying that the scarcity of a "dainty" or anything very desirable makes it all the more valuable.

[2] tide, season.

And in his falsed fancy he her takes
To be the fairest wight that lived yit;
Which to expresse he bends his gentle wit:
And, thinking of those braunches greene to frame
A girlond for her dainty forehead fit,
He pluckt a bough; out of whose rifte there came
Smal drops of gory bloud, that trickled down the same.

XXXI

Therewith a piteous yelling voice was heard,
Crying, 'O! spare with guilty hands to teare
My tender sides in this rough rynd embard;[1]
But fly, ah! fly far hence away, for feare
Least to you hap that happened to me heare,
And to this wretched Lady, my deare love;
O, too deare love, love bought with death too deare!'
Astond he stood, and up his heare did hove;[2]
And with that suddein horror could no member move.

XXXII

At last whenas the dreadfull passion
Was overpast, and manhood well awake,
Yet musing at the straunge occasion,
And doubting much his sence, he thus bespake:
'What voice of damned Ghost from Limbo lake,[3]
Or guilefull spright wandring in empty aire,
Both which fraile men doe oftentimes mistake,
Sends to my doubtful eares these speaches rare,
And ruefull plaints, me bidding guiltlesse blood to spare?'

[1] **embard**, confined. [2] **hove**, rise.

[3] **Limbo lake** here means a place of punishment, but, in mediæval theology, a region bordering hell, where saints await the resurrection.

XXXIII

Then, groning deep; 'Nor damned Ghost,' (quoth he,)
'Nor guileful sprite to thee these words doth speake;
But once a man, Fradubio, now a tree;
Wretched man, wretched tree! whose nature weake
A cruell witch, her cursed will to wreake,
Hath thus transformd, and plast in open plaines,
Where Boreas [1] doth blow full bitter bleake,
And scorching Sunne does dry my secret vaines;
For though a tree I seme, yet cold and heat me paines.'

XXXIV

'Say on, Fradubio, then, or man or tree,'
Quoth then the Knight; 'by whose mischievous arts
Art thou misshaped thus, as now I see?
He oft finds med'cine who his griefe imparts,
But double griefs afflict concealing harts,
As raging flames who striveth to suppresse.'
'The author then,' (said he) 'of all my smarts,
Is one Duessa, a false sorceresse,
That many errant [2] knights hath broght to wretchednesse.

XXXV

'In prime of youthly yeares, when corage hott
The fire of love, and joy of chevalree,
First kindled in my brest, it was my lott
To love this gentle Lady, whome ye see
Now not a Lady, but a seeming tree;

[1] Boreas, the north wind.

[2] errant, wandering in search of adventure. The knight errant was a favorite character in romance.

With whome, as once I rode accompanyde,
Me chaunced of a knight encountred bee,
That had a like faire Lady by his syde;
Lyke a faire Lady, but did fowle Duessa hyde.

XXXVI

'Whose forged beauty he did take in hand
All other Dames to have exceeded farre:
I in defence of mine did likewise stand,
Mine, that did then shine as the Morning starre.
So both to batteill fierce arraunged arre,
In which his harder fortune was to fall
Under my speare: such is the dye[1] of warre.
His Lady, left as a prise martiall,
Did yield her comely person to be at my call.

XXXVII

'So doubly lov'd of ladies, unlike faire,
Th' one seeming such, the other such indeede,
One day in doubt I cast for to compare
Whether in beauties glorie did exceede
A Rosy girlond was the victors meede.
Both seemde to win, and both seemde won to bee,
So hard the discord was to be agreede.
Frælissa was as faire as faire mote bee,
And ever false Duessa seemde as faire as shee.

XXXVIII

'The wicked witch, now seeing all this while
The doubtfull ballaunce equally to sway,
What not by right she cast to win by guile;

[1] dye, chance brought by throwing the dice.

And by her hellish science raisd streight way
A foggy mist that overcast the day,
And a dull blast, that breathing on her face
Dimmed her former beauties shining ray,
And with foule ugly forme did her disgrace:
Then was she fayre alone, when none was faire in place.

XXXIX

'Then cride she out, "Fye, fye! deformed wight,
Whose borrowed beautie now appeareth plaine
To have before bewitched all mens sight:
O! leave her soone, or let her soone be slaine."
Her loathly visage viewing with disdaine,
Eftsoones I thought her such as she me told,
And would have kild her; but with faigned paine
The false witch did my wrathfull hand withhold:
So left her, where she now is turnd to treen mould.[1]

XL

'Thensforth I tooke Duessa for my Dame,
And in the witch unweeting joyd long time,
Ne ever wist but that she was the same;
Till on a day (that day is everie Prime,[2]
When Witches wont do penance for their crime,)
I chaunst to see her in her proper hew,
Bathing her selfe in origane[3] and thyme:
A filthy foule old woman I did vew,
That ever to have toucht her I did deadly rew.

[1] mould, form.
[2] Prime, spring-time.
[3] origane, marjoram.

XLI

. . . . . .

'Thensforth from her most beastly companie
I gan refraine, in minde to slipp away,
Soone as appeard safe opportunitie:
For danger great, if not assurd decay,
I saw before mine eyes, if I were knowne to stray.

XLII

'The divelish hag by chaunges of my cheare
Perceiv'd my thought; and, drownd in sleepie night,
With wicked herbes and oyntments did besmeare
My body all, through charmes and magicke might,
That all my senses were bereaved quight:
Then brought she me into this desert waste,
And by my wretched lovers side me pight;[1]
Where now, enclosd in wooden wals full faste,
Banisht from living wights, our wearie daies we waste.'

XLIII

'But how long time,' said then the Elfin knight,
'Are you in this misformed hous to dwell?'
'We may not chaunge,' (quoth he,) 'this evill plight,
Till we be bathed in a living well:
That is the terme prescribed by the spell.'
'O! how,' sayd he, 'mote I that well out find,
That may restore you to your wonted well?'
'Time and suffised[2] fates to former kynd[3]
Shall us restore; none else from hence may us unbynd.'

[1] **pight**, fixed. [2] **suffised**, satisfied. [3] **kynd**, nature.

XLIV

The false Duessa, now Fidessa hight,
Heard how in vaine Fradubio did lament,
And knew well all was true. But the good knight,
Full of sad feare and ghastly dreriment,
When all this speech the living tree had spent,
The bleeding bough did thrust into the ground,
That from the blood he might be innocent,
And with fresh clay did close the wooden wound:
Then, turning to his Lady, dead with feare her fownd.

XLV

Her seeming dead he fownd with feigned feare,
As all unweeting of that well she knew;
And paynd himselfe with busie care to reare
Her out of carelesse swowne. Her eyelids blew,
And dimmed sight, with pale and deadly hew,
At last she up gan lift: with trembling cheare
Her up he tooke, (too simple and too trew)
And oft her kist. At length, all passed feare,[1]
He set her on her steede, and forward forth did beare.

CANTO III

Forsaken Truth long seekes her love,
And makes the Lyon mylde;
Marres blind Devotions mart, and fals
In hand of leachour vylde.

I

Nought is there under heav'ns wide hollownesse,
That moves more deare compassion of mind,

[1] all passed feare, all fear past.

Then beautie brought t'unworthie wretchednesse
Through envies snares, or fortunes freakes unkind.
I, whether lately through her brightnes blynd,
Or through alleageance, and fast fealty,
Which I do owe unto all womankynd,
Feele my hart perst with so great agony,
When such I see, that all for pitty I could dy.

II

And now it is empassioned so deepe,
For fairest Unaes sake, of whom I sing,
That my frayle eies these lines with teares do steepe,
To thinke how she through guyleful handeling,
Though true as touch,[1] though daughter of a king,
Though faire as ever living wight was fayre,
Though nor in word nor deede ill meriting,
Is from her knight divorced in despayre,
And her dew loves deryv'd [2] to that vile witches shayre.

III

Yet she, most faithfull Ladie, all this while
Forsaken, wofull, solitarie mayd,
Far from all peoples preace, as in exile,
In wildernesse and wastfull deserts strayd,
To seeke her knight; who, subtily betrayd
Through that late vision which th' Enchaunter wrought,
Had her abandond. She, of nought affrayd,
Through woods and wastnes wide him daily sought;
Yet wished tydinges none of him unto her brought.

[1] **touch**, touchstone, used in testing the purity of gold or silver.

[2] **deryv'd**, transferred.

IV

One day, nigh wearie of the yrkesome way,
From her unhastie beast she did alight;
And on the grasse her dainty limbs did lay
In secrete shadow, far from all mens sight:
From her fayre head her fillet she undight,[1]
And layd her stole aside. Her angels face,
As the great eye of heaven, shyned bright,
And made a sunshine in the shady place;
Did never mortall eye behold such heavenly grace.

V

It fortuned, out of the thickest wood
A ramping Lyon rushed suddeinly,
Hunting full greedy after salvage blood.
Soone as the royall virgin he did spy,
With gaping mouth at her ran greedily,
To have attonce devourd her tender corse;
But to the pray when as he drew more ny,
His bloody rage aswaged with remorse,
And, with the sight amazd, forgat his furious forse.

VI

In stead thereof he kist her wearie feet,
And lickt her lilly hands with fawning tong,
As he her wronged innocence did weet.[2]
O, how can beautie maister the most strong,
And simple truth subdue avenging wrong!
Whose yielded pryde and proud submission,
Still dreading death, when she had marked long,

[1] undight, unloosed, undid.
[2] weet, know.

Her hart gan melt in great compassion;
And drizling teares did shed for pure affection.

VII

'The Lyon, Lord of everie beast in field,'
Quoth she, 'his princely puissance doth abate,
And mightie proud to humble weake does yield,
Forgetfull of the hungry rage, which late
Him prickt, in pittie of my sad estate:
But he, my Lyon, and my noble Lord,
How does he find in cruell hart to hate
Her, that him lov'd, and ever most adord
As the God of my life? why hath he me abhord?'

VIII

Redounding teares did choke th' end of her plaint,
Which softly ecchoed from the neighbour wood;
And, sad to see her sorrowfull constraint,
The kingly beast upon her gazing stood:
With pittie calmd downe fell his angry mood.
At last, in close hart shutting up her payne,
Arose the virgin, borne of heavenly brood,
And to her snowy Palfrey got agayne,
To seeke her strayed Champion if she might attayne.

IX

The Lyon would not leave her desolate,
But with her went along, as a strong gard
Of her chast person, and a faythfull mate
Of her sad troubles and misfortunes hard:
Still, when she slept, he kept both watch and ward:
And, when she wakt, he wayted diligent,
With humble service to her will prepard:

From her fayre eyes he tooke commandement,
And ever by her lookes conceived her intent.

X

Long she thus traveiled through deserts wyde,
By which she thought her wandring knight shold pas,
Yet never shew of living wight espyde;
Till that at length she found the troden gras,
In which the tract of peoples footing was,
Under the steepe foot of a mountaine hore:
The same she followes, till at last she has
A damzel spyde, slow footing her before,
That on her shoulders sad a pot of water bore.

XI

To whom approching she to her gan call,
To weet if dwelling place were nigh at hand;
But the rude wench her answerd nought at all:
She could not heare, nor speake, not understand;
Till, seeing by her side the Lyon stand,
With suddeine feare her pitcher downe she threw,
And fled away: for never in that land
Face of fayre Lady she before did vew,
And that dredd Lyons looke her cast in deadly hew.

XII

Full fast she fled, ne ever lookt behynd,
As if her life upon the wager lay;
And home she came, whereas her mother blynd
Sate in eternall night: nought could she say;
But, suddeine catching hold, did her dismay

With quaking hands, and other signes of feare:
Who, full of ghastly fright and cold affray,[1]
Gan shut the dore. By this arrived there
Dame Una, weary Dame, and entrance did requere:

XIII

Which when none yielded, her unruly Page
With his rude clawes the wicket[2] open rent,
And let her in; where, of his cruell rage
Nigh dead with feare, and faint astonishment,
Shee found them both in darksome corner pent;
Where that old woman day and night did pray
Upon her beads, devoutly penitent:
Nine hundred *Pater nosters* every day,
And thrise nine hundred *Aves* she was wont to say.

XIV

And to augment her painefull penaunce more,
Thrise every weeke in ashes shee did sitt,
And next her wrinkled skin rough sackecloth wore,
And thrise three times did fast from any bitt;
But now, for feare her beads she did forgett:
Whose needlesse dread for to remove away,
Faire Una framed words and count'naunce fitt;
Which hardly doen, at length she gan them pray,
That in their cotage small that night she rest her may.

XV

The day is spent; and commeth drowsie night,
When every creature shrowded is in sleepe.

[1] **affray**, terror.

[2] **wicket**, a small gate, or door; often a section of an unused larger door.

Sad Una downe her laies in weary plight,
And at her feete the Lyon watch doth keepe:
In stead of rest she does lament and weepe,
For the late losse of her deare loved knight,
And sighes, and grones, and evermore does steepe
Her tender brest in bitter teares all night;
All night she thinks too long, and often lookes for light.

XVI

Now when Aldeboran[1] was mounted hye
Above the shinie Cassiopeias chaire,[2]
And all in deadly sleepe did drowned lye
One knocked at the dore, and in would fare:
He knocked fast, and often curst, and sware,
That ready entraunce was not at his call;
For on his backe a heavy load he bare
Of nightly stelths, and pillage severall,
Which he had got abroad by purchas criminall.

XVII

He was, to weete,[3] a stout and sturdy thiefe,
Wont to robbe churches of their ornaments,
And poore mens boxes of their due reliefe,
Which given was to them for good intents:
The holy Saints of their rich vestiments
He did disrobe, when all men carelesse slept,
And spoild the Priests of their habiliments;
Whiles none the holy things in safety kept,
Then he by conning sleights in at the window crept.

[1] **Aldeboran**, a star in the eye of Taurus.

[2] **Cassiopeias chaire**, a constellation named for a fabulous queen of Ethiopia.

[3] **to weete**, to wit.

XVIII

And all that he by right or wrong could find,
Unto this house he brought, and did bestow
Upon the daughter of this woman blind,
Abessa, daughter of Corceca slow,
. . . . . .
And fed her fatt with feast of offerings,
And plenty, which in all the land did grow:
Ne spared he to give her gold and rings;
And now he to her brought part of his stolen things.

XIX

Thus, long the dore with rage and threats he bett,
Yet of those fearfull women none durst rize.
The Lyon frayed them, him in to lett.
He would no lenger stay him to advize,
But open breakes the dore in furious wize,
And entring is, when that disdainfull beast,
Encountring fierce, him suddein doth surprize;
And, seizing cruell clawes on trembling brest,
Under his Lordly foot him proudly hath supprest.[1]

XX

Him booteth not resist, nor succour call,
His bleeding hart is in the vengers hand;
Who streight him rent in thousand peeces small,
And quite dismembred hath: the thirsty land
Dronke up his life; his corse left on the strand.
His fearefull freends weare out the wofull night,
Ne dare to weepe, nor seeme to understand

[1] **supprest**, overpowered.

The heavie hap which on them is alight;
Affraid least to themselves the like mishappen might.

XXI

Now when broad day the world discovered has,
Up Una rose, up rose the lyon eke;
And on their former journey forward pas,
In waies unknowne, her wandring knight to seeke,
With paines far passing that long wandring Greeke,[1]
That for his love refused deitye.
Such were the labours of this Lady meeke,
Still seeking him, that from her still did flye;
Then furthest from her hope, when most she weened nye.

XXII

Soone as she parted thence, the fearfull twayne,
That blind old woman, and her daughter dear,
Came forth; and, finding Kirkrapine there slayne,
For anguish great they gan to rend their heare,
And beat their brests, and naked flesh to teare:
And when they both had wept and wayld their fill,
Then forth they ran, like two amazed deare,
Halfe mad through malice and revenging will,
To follow her that was the causer of their ill.

XXIII

Whome overtaking, they gan loudly bray,
With hollow houling, and lamenting cry;
Shamefully at her rayling all the way,
And her accusing of dishonesty,
That was the flowre of faith and chastity:

[1] wandring Greeke, Ulysses.

And still, amidst her rayling, she did pray
That plagues, and mischiefes, and long misery,
Might fall on her, and follow all the way,
And that in endlesse error she might ever stray.

XXIV

But, when she saw her prayers nought prevaile,
Shee backe retourned with some labour lost;
And in the way, as shee did weepe and waile,
A knight her mett in mighty armes embost,[1]
Yet knight was not for all his bragging bost;
But subtill Archimag, that Una sought
By traynes[2] into new troubles to have toste·
Of that old woman tidings he besought,
If that of such a Lady shee could tellen ought.

XXV

Therewith she gan her passion to renew,
And cry, and curse, and raile, and rend her heare,
Saying, that harlott she too lately knew,
That causd her shed so many a bitter teare;
And so forth told the story of her feare.
Much seemed he to mone her haplesse chaunce,
And after for that Lady did inquere;
Which being taught, he forward gan advaunce
His fair enchaunted steed, and eke his charmed launce

XXVI

Ere long he came where Una traveild slow,
And that wilde champion wayting her besyde;
Whome seeing such, for dread hee durst not show

[1] **embost**, enclosed, encased.
[2] **traynes**, snares, deceits.

Him selfe too nigh at hand, but turned wyde
Unto an hil; from whence when she him spyde,
By his like seeming shield her knight by name
She weend it was, and towards him gan ride:
Approaching nigh she wist it was the same;
And with faire fearefull humblesse towards him shee came:

XXVII

And weeping said, 'Ah, my long lacked Lord,
Where have ye bene thus long out of my sight?
Much feared I to have been quite abhord,
Or ought have done, that ye displeasen might,
That should as death unto my deare[1] heart light:
For since mine eie your joyous sight[2] did mis,
My chearefull day is turnd to chearelesse night,
And eke my night of death the shadow is;
But welcome now, my light, and shining lampe of blis!'

XXVIII

He thereto meeting said, 'My dearest Dame,
Far be it from your thought, and fro my wil,
To thinke that knighthood I so much should shame,
As you to leave that have me loved stil,
And chose in Faery court, of meere goodwil,
Where noblest knights were to be found on earth.
The earth shall sooner leave her kindly skil
To bring forth fruit, and make eternal derth,
Then I leave you, my liefe,[3] yborn of hevenly berth.

[1] deare, sad, sore.
[2] your joyous sight, the joyous sight of you.
[3] liefe, dear.

XXIX

'And sooth to say, why I lefte you so long,
Was for to seeke adventure in straunge place;
Where, Archimago said, a felon strong
To many knights did daily worke disgrace;
But knight he now shall never more deface:
Good cause of mine excuse,[1] that mote[2] ye please
Well to accept, and evermore embrace
My faithfull service, that by land and seas
Have vowd you to defend. Now then, your plaint appease.'

XXX

His lovely words her seemd due recompence
Of all her passed paines: one loving howre
For many yeares of sorrow can dispence;
A dram of sweete is worth a pound of sowre.
Shee has forgott how many a woeful stowre
For him she late endurd; she speakes no more
Of past: true is, that true love hath no powre
To looken backe; his eies be fixt before.
Before her stands her knight, for whom she toyld so sore.

XXXI

Much like, as when the beaten marinere,
That long hath wandred in the Ocean wide,
Ofte soust in swelling Tethys saltish teare;
And long time having tand his tawney hide
With blustring breath of Heaven, that none can bide,
And scorching flames of fierce Orions hound;[3]

[1] **of mine excuse**, for excusing me. [2] **mote**, may.
[3] **Orions hound**, Sirius, the dog-star. Orion was a hunter, in Greek mythology.

Soone as the port from far he has espide,
His chearfull whistle merily doth sound,
And Nereus[1] crownes with cups;[2] his mates him pledg around.

XXXII

Such joy made Una, when her knight she found;
And eke th' enchaunter joyous seemde no lesse
Then the glad marchant, that does vew from ground
His ship far come from watrie wildernesse;
He hurles out vowes, and Neptune oft doth blesse.
So forth they past; and all the way they spent
Discoursing of her dreadful late distresse,
In which he askt her, what the Lyon ment;
Who told her[3] all that fell, in journey as she went.

XXXIII

They had not ridden far, when they might see
One pricking towards them with hastie heat,
Full strongly armd, and on a courser free
That through his fiersnesse fomed all with sweat,
And the sharpe yron did for anger eat,
When his hot ryder spurd his chauffed side:
His looke was sterne, and seemed still to threat
Cruell revenge, which he in hart did hyde;
And on his shield *Sansloy* in bloody lines was dyde.

XXXIV

When nigh he drew unto this gentle payre,
And saw the Red-crosse which the knight did beare,

[1] **Nereus**, a sea-god, father of the sea-nymphs.

[2] **crownes with cups**, honors by drinking, to him, full cups of wine.

[3] **her**, object of fell = told all that befell her.

He burnt in fire; and gan eftsoones prepare
Himselfe to batteill with his couched speare.
Loth was that other, and did faint through feare,
To taste th' untryed dint of deadly steele:
But yet his Lady did so well him cheare,
That hope of new good hap he gan to feele;
So bent his speare, and spurd his horse with yron heele.

XXXV

But that proud Paynim forward came so fierce
And full of wrath, that, with his sharphead speare,
Through vainly crossed shield he quite did perce;
And, had his staggering steed not shronke for feare,
Through shield and body eke he should him beare:
Yet, so great was the puissance of his push,
That from his sadle quite he did him beare.
He, tombling rudely downe, to ground did rush,
And from his gored wound a well of bloud did gush.

XXXVI

Dismounting lightly from his loftie steed,
He to him lept, in minde to reave his life,
And proudly said; 'Lo! there the worthie meed
Of him that slew Sansfoy with bloody knife:
Henceforth his ghost, freed from repining strife,
In peace may passen over Lethe lake;
When mourning altars, purgd with enimies life,
The black infernall Furies[1] doen aslake:[2]
Life from Sansfoy thou tookst, Sansloy shall fron thee take.'

[1] **Furies**, Greek Erinyes, goddesses of vengeance. Spenser confuses them with the Latin Manes, spirits of the dead.

[2] **aslake**, appease.

XXXVII

Therewith in haste his helmet gan unlace,
Till Una cride, 'O! hold that heavie hand,
Deare Sir, what ever that thou be in place:[1]
Enough is, that thy foe doth vanquisht stand
Now at thy mercy: Mercy not withstand;
For he is one the truest knight alive,
Though conquered now he lye on lowly land;
And, whilest him fortune favourd, fayre did thrive
In bloudy field; therefore, of life him not deprive.'

XXXVIII

Her piteous wordes might not abate his rage,
But, rudely rending up his helmet, would
Have slayne him streight; but when he sees his age,
And hoarie head of Archimago old,
His hasty hand he doth amased hold,
And halfe ashamed wondred at the sight:
For the old man well knew he, though untold,
In charmes and magick to have wondrous might,
Ne ever wont in field, ne in round lists,[2] to fight:

XXXIX

And said, 'Why Archimago, lucklesse syre,
What doe I see? what hard mishap is this,
That hath thee hether brought to taste mine yre?
Or thine the fault, or mine the error is,
In stead of foe to wound my friend amis?'

[1] **place**, rank.

[2] **round lists**, the circular inclosure of ground where chivalric combats were held.

He answered nought, but in a traunce still lay,
And on those guilefull dazed eyes of his
The cloude of death did sit. Which doen away,
He left him lying so, ne would no lenger stay:

XL

But to the virgin comes; who all this while
Amased stands, her selfe so mockt to see
By him, who has the guerdon of his guile,
For so misfeigning her true knight to bee:
Yet is she now in more perplexitie,
Left in the hand of that same Paynim bold,
From whom her booteth not at all to flie:
Who, by her cleanly garment catching hold,
Her from her Palfrey pluckt, her visage to behold.

XLI

But her fiers servant, full of kingly aw
And high disdaine, whenas his soveraine Dame
So rudely handled by her foe he saw,
With gaping jawes full greedy at him came,
And, ramping on his shield, did weene the same
Have reft away with his sharp rending clawes:
But he was stout, and lust did now inflame
His corage more, that from his griping pawes
He hath his shield redeemd, and forth his swerd he drawes.

XLII

O! then, too weake and feeble was the forse
Of salvage beast his puissance to withstand;
For he was strong, and of so mightie corse,
As ever wielded speare in warlike hand,

And feates of armes did wisely understand.
Eft soones he perced through his chaufed chest
With thrilling [1] point of deadly yron brand,[2]
And launcht his Lordly hart: with death opprest
He ror'd aloud, whiles life forsooke his stubborne brest.

XLIII

Who now is left to keepe the forlorne maid
From raging spoile of lawlesse victors will?
Her faithfull gard remov'd, her hope dismaid,
Her selfe a yielded pray to save or spill:[3]
He now, Lord of the field, his pride to fill,
With foule reproches and disdaineful spight
Her vildly entertaines; and, will or nill,
Beares her away upon his courser light:
Her prayers nought prevaile, his rage is more of might.

XLIV

And all the way, with great lamenting paine,
And piteous plaintes, she filleth his dull eares,
That stony hart could riven have in twaine;
And all the way she wetts with flowing teares;
But he, enrag'd with rancor, nothing heares.
Her servile beast yet would not leave her so,
But followes her far off, ne ought he feares
To be partaker of her wandring woe;
More mild in beastly kind then that her beastly foe.

[1] thrilling, piercing.
[2] brand, sword, a common term.
[3] spill, destroy.

CANTO IV

To sinfull hous of Pryde Duessa
Guydes the faithfull knight:
Where, brothers death to wreak, Sansjoy
Doth chaleng him to fight.

I

YOUNG knight whatever, that dost armes professe,
And through long labours huntest after fame,
Beware of fraud, beware of ficklenesse,
In choice, and chaunge of thy deare-loved Dame;
Least thou of her believe too lightly blame,
And rash misweening doe thy hart remove:
For unto knight there is no greater shame
Then lightnesse and inconstancie in love:
That doth this Redcrosse knights ensample plainly prove.

II

Who, after that he had faire Una lorne,[1]
Through light misdeeming of her loialtie;
And false Duessa in her sted had borne,
Called Fidess', and so supposd to be,
Long with her traveild; till at last they see
A goodly building bravely garnished;
The house of mightie Prince it seemd to be,
And towards it a broad high way that led,
All bare through peoples feet which thether traveiled.

III

Great troupes of people traveild thetherward
Both day and night, of each degree and place;

[1] lorne, deserted.

But few returned, having scaped hard,
With balefull beggery, or foule disgrace;
Which ever after in most wretched case,
Like loathsome lazars, by the hedges lay.
Thether Duessa badd him bend his pace,
For she is wearie of the toilsom way,
And also nigh consumed is the lingring day.

IV

A stately Pallace built of squared bricke,
Which cunningly was without morter laid,
Whose wals were high, but nothing strong nor thick,
And golden foile all over them displaid,
That purest skye with brightnesse they dismaid:
High lifted up were many loftie towres,
And goodly galleries far over laid,
Full of faire windowes and delightful bowres:
And on the top a Diall told the timely howres.

V

It was a goodly heape for to behould,
And spake the praises of the workmans witt;
But full great pittie, that so faire a mould
Did on so weake foundation ever sitt:
For on a sandie hill, that still did flitt[1]
And fall away, it mounted was full hie,
That every breath of heaven shaked itt:
And all the hinder partes, that few could spie,
Were ruinous and old, but painted cunningly.

[1] flitt, move, change.

VI

Arrived there, they passed in forth right;[1]
For still to all the gates stood open wide:
Yet charge of them was to a Porter hight,[2]
Cald Malvenú, who entrance none denide:
Thence to the hall, which was on every side
With rich array and costly arras dight.
Infinite sortes of people did abide
There waiting long, to win the wished sight
Of her, that was the Lady of that Pallace bright.

VII

By them they passe, all gazing on them round,
And to the Presence mount; whose glorious vew
Their frayle amazed senses did confound:
In living Princes court none ever knew
Such endlesse richesse, and so sumpteous shew;
Ne Persia selfe, the nourse of pompous pride,
Like ever saw. And there a noble crew
Of Lords and Ladies stood on every side,
Which with their presence fayre the place much beautifide.

VIII

High above all a cloth of State was spred,
And a rich throne, as bright as sunny day;
On which there sate, most brave embellished
With royall robes and gorgeous array,
A mayden Queene that shone as Titans ray,
In glistring gold and perelesse pretious stone;
Yet her bright blazing beautie did assay

[1] **forth right**, straightway.
[2] **hight**, here = intrusted.

To dim the brightnesse of her glorious throne,
As envying her selfe, that too exceeding shone:

IX

Exceeding shone, like Phœbus fayrest childe,[1]
That did presume his fathers fyrie wayne,
And flaming mouthes of steedes, unwonted wilde,
Through highest heaven with weaker hand to rayne:
Proud of such glory and advancement vayne,
While flashing beames do daze his feeble eyen,
He leaves the welkin way most beaten playne,[2]
And, rapt with whirling wheeles, inflames the skyen
With fire not made to burne, but fayrely for to shyne.

X

So proud she shyned in her princely state,
Looking to heaven, for earth she did disdayne,
And sitting high, for lowly she did hate:
Lo! underneath her scornefull feete was layne
A dreadfull Dragon with an hideous trayne;
And in her hand she held a mirrhour bright,
Wherein her face she often vewed fayne,[3]
And in her selfe-lov'd semblance took delight;
For she was wondrous faire, as any living wight.

XI

Of griesly Pluto she the daughter was,
And sad Proserpina, the Queene of hell;
Yet did she thinke her pearelesse worth to pas

[1] **Phœbus . . . childe**, Phaëthon, who, failing in his attempt to guide the horses of the sun, was slain by Jove's lightning.

[2] **welkin way**, etc., the usual path across the sky.

[3] **fayne**, fain = gladly.

That parentage, with pride so did she swell;
And thundring Jove, that high in heaven doth dwell
And wield the world, she claymed for her syre,
Or if that any else did Jove excell;
For to the highest she did still aspyre,
Or, if ought higher were than that, did it desyre.

XII

And proud Lucifera men did her call,
That made her selfe a Queene, and crownd to be;
Yet rightfull kingdome she had none at all,
Ne heritage of native soveraintie;
But did usurpe with wrong and tyrannie
Upon the scepter which she now did hold:
Ne ruld her Realme with lawes, but pollicie,
And strong advizement of six wisards[1] old,
That, with their counsels bad, her kingdome did uphold.

XIII

Soone as the Elfin knight in presence came,
And false Duessa, seeming Lady fayre,
A gentle Husher, Vanitie by name,
Made rowme, and passage for them did prepaire:
So goodly brought them to the lowest stayre
Of her high throne; where they, on humble knee
Making obeysaunce, did the cause declare,
Why they were come her roiall state to see,
To prove the wide report of her great Majestee.

XIV

With loftie eyes, halfe loth to looke so lowe,
She thancked them in her disdainefull wise;

[1] wisards, wise men.

Ne other grace vouchsafed them to showe
Of Princesse worthy; scarse them bad arise.
Her Lordes and Ladies all this while devise
Themselves to setten forth to straungers sight:
Some frounce[1] their curled heare in courtly guise;
Some prancke[2] their ruffes; and others trimly dight
Their gay attyre; each others greater pride does spight.

XV

Goodly they all that knight doe entertayne,
Right glad with him to have increast their crew;
But to Duess' each one himselfe did payne
All kindnesse and faire courtesie to shew,
For in that court whylome her well they knew:
Yet the stout Faery mongst the middest crowd
Thought all their glorie vaine in knightly vew,
And that great Princesse too exceeding prowd,
That to strange knight no better countenance allowd.

XVI

Suddein upriseth from her stately place
The roiall Dame, and for her coche doth call:
All hurtlen[3] forth; and she, with princely pace,
As faire Aurora in her purple pall
Out of the East the dawning day doth call.
So forth she comes; her brightnes brode doth blaze.
The heapes of people, thronging in the hall,
Doe ride each other upon her to gaze:
Her glorious glitterand light doth all mens eies amaze.

[1] **frounce**, curl, frizzle. [2] **prancke**, adorn, adjust.
[3] **hurtlen**, rush.

XVII

So forth she comes, and to her coche does clyme,
Adorned all with gold and girlonds gay,
That seemd as fresh as Flora in her prime;
And strove to match, in roiall rich array,
Great Junoes golden chayre; the which, they say,
The gods stand gazing on, when she does ride
To Joves high hous through heavens bras-paved way,
Drawne of fayre Pecocks, that excell in pride,
And full of Argus [1] eyes their tayles dispredden wide.

XVIII

But this was drawne of six unequall beasts,
On which her six sage Counsellours did ryde,
Taught to obay their bestiall beheasts,
With like conditions to their kindes applyde:
Of which the first, that all the rest did guyde,
Was sluggish Idlenesse, the nourse of sin;
Upon a slouthfull Asse he chose to ryde,
Arayd in habit blacke, and amis [2] thin,
Like to an holy Monck, the service to begin.

XIX

And in his hand his Portesse [3] still he bare,
That much was worne, but therein little redd;
For of devotion he had little care,
Still drownd in sleepe, and most of his daies dedd:
Scarse could he once uphold his heavie hedd,

[1] **Argus**, the possessor of one hundred eyes which, upon his death, were transferred to the peacock's tail.

[2] **amis**, amice = a priest's robe.

[3] **Portesse**, breviary.

To looken whether it were night or day.
May seeme the wayne was very evill ledd,
When such an one had guiding of the way,
That knew not whether right he went, or else astray.

XX

From worldly cares himselfe he did esloyne,[1]
And greatly shunned manly exercise;
From everie worke he chalenged essoyne,[2]
For contemplation sake: yet otherwise
His life he led in lawlesse riotise,
By which he grew to grievous malady;
For in his lustlesse limbs, through evill guise,
A shaking fever raignd continually.
Such one was Idlenesse, first of this company.

XXI

And by his side rode loathsome Gluttony,
Deformed creature, on a filthie swyne.
His belly was upblowne with luxury,
And eke with fatnesse swollen were his eyne;
And like a Crane his necke was long and fyne
With which he swallowed up excessive feast,
For want whereof poore people oft did pyne:
And all the way, most like a brutish beast,
He spued up his gorge, that all did him deteast.

XXII

In greene vine leaves he was right fitly clad,
For other clothes he could not weare for heate;
And on his head an yvie girland had,
From under which fast trickled downe the sweat.

[1] **esloyne**, withdraw. [2] **essoyne**, excuse.

Still as he rode he somewhat still did eat,
And in his hand did beare a bouzing[1] can,
Of which he supt so oft, that on his seat
His dronken corse he scarse upholden can:
In shape and life more like a monster then a man.

XXIII

Unfit he was for any worldly thing,
And eke unhable once to stirre or go;
Not meet to be of counsell to a king,
Whose mind in meat and drinke was drowned so,
That from his frend he seeldome knew his fo.
Full of diseases was his carcas blew,
And a dry dropsie through his flesh did flow,
Which by misdiet daily greater grew.
Such one was Gluttony, the second of that crew.

. . . . . .

XXVII

And greedy Avarice by him[2] did ride,
Uppon a Camell loaden all with gold;
Two iron coffers hong on either side,
With precious metall full as they might hold;
And in his lap an heap of coine he told;[3]
For of his wicked pelfe his God he made,
And unto hell him selfe for money sold:
Accursed usury was all his trade,
And right and wrong ylike in equall ballaunce waide

[1] **bouzing**, drinking.

[2] Lechery, "the third of all this traine," described in stanzas XXIV–XXVI.

[3] **told**, counted.

XXVIII

His life was nigh unto deaths dore yplaste;
And thred-bare cote, and cobled shoes, hee ware;
Ne scarse good morsell all his life did taste,
But both from backe and belly still did spare,
To fill his bags, and richesse to compare:[1]
Yet childe ne kinsman living had he none
To leave them to; but thorough daily care
To get, and nightly feare to lose his owne,
He led a wretched life, unto himselfe unknowne.

XXIX

Most wretched wight, whom nothing might suffise;
Whose greedy lust[2] did lacke in greatest store;
Whose need had end, but no end covetise;[3]
Whose welth was want, whose plenty made him pore;
Who had enough, yett wished ever more;
A vile disease: and eke in foote and hand
A grievous gout tormented him full sore,
That well he could not touch, nor goe, nor stand.
Such one was Avarice, the fourth of this faire band.

XXX

And next to him malicious Envy rode
Upon a ravenous wolfe, and still did chaw
Between his cankred teeth a venemous tode,
That all the poison ran about his chaw,[4]
But inwardly he chawed his owne maw[5]
At neighbours welth, that made him ever sad,

[1] **compare**, collect.
[2] **lust**, desire, pleasure.
[3] **covetise**, covetousness.
[4] **chaw**, jaw.
[5] **maw**, stomach.

For death it was, when any good he saw;
And wept, that cause of weeping none he had;
But when he heard of harme he wexed wondrous glad.

XXXI

All in a kirtle of discolourd say[1]
He clothed was, ypaynted full of eies;
And in his bosome secretly there lay
An hatefull Snake, the which his taile uptyes
In many folds, and mortall sting implyes.[2]
Still as he rode he gnasht his teeth to see
Those heapes of gold with griple[3] Covetyse;
And grudged at the great felicitee
Of proud Lucifera, and his owne companee.

XXXII

He hated all good workes and vertuous deeds,
And him no lesse, that any like did use;
And who with gratious bread the hungry feeds,
His almes for want of faith he doth accuse.
So every good to bad he doth abuse;
And eke the verse of famous Poets witt
He does backebite, and spightfull poison spues
From leprous mouth on all that ever writt.
Such one vile Envy was, that fifte in row did sitt.

XXXIII

And him beside rides fierce revenging Wrath,
Upon a Lion, loth for to be led;
And in his hand a burning brond he hath,
The which he brandisheth about his hed:

[1] say, a thin, delicate serge. [2] implyes, enwraps.
[3] griple, grasping.

His eies did hurle forth sparcles fiery red,
And stared sterne on all that him beheld;
As ashes pale of hew, and seeming ded;
And on his dagger still his hand he held,
Trembling through hasty rage when choler in him sweld.

XXXIV

His ruffin [1] raiment all was staind with blood
Which he had spilt, and all to rags yrent,
Through unadvized rashnes woxen wood; [2]
For of his hands he had no governement,
Ne car'd for blood in his avengement:
But, when the furious fitt was overpast,
His cruel facts [3] he often would repent;
Yet, wilfull man, he never would forecast
How many mischieves should ensue his heedlesse hast.

XXXV

Full many mischiefes follow cruell Wrath:
Abhorred bloodshed, and tumultuous strife,
Unmanly murder, and unthrifty scath,[4]
Bitter despight, with rancours rusty knife,
And fretting griefe, the enemy of life:
All these, and many evils moe [5] haunt ire,
The swelling Splene, and Frenzy raging rife,
The shaking Palsey, and Saint Fraunces fire.[6]
Such one was Wrath, the last of this ungodly tire.[7]

[1] **ruffin**, disordered. [2] **wood**, mad.
[3] **facts**, feats, acts. [4] **scath**, damage. [5] **moe**, more.
[6] **Saint Fraunces fire**, St. Anthony's fire = erysipelas.
[7] **tire**, train.

XXXVI

And, after all, upon the wagon beame,
Rode Sathan with a smarting whip in hand,
With which he forward lasht the laesy teme,
So oft as Slowth still in the mire did stand.
Huge routs of people did about them band,
Showting for joy; and still before their way
A foggy mist had covered all the land;
And, underneath their feet, all scattered lay
Dead sculls and bones of men whose life had gone astray.

XXXVII

So forth they marchen in this goodly sort,
To take the solace of the open aire,
And in fresh flowring fields themselves to sport:
Emongst the rest rode that false Lady faire,
The foule Duessa, next unto the chaire
Of proud Lucifer', as one of the traine:
But that good knight would not so nigh repaire,
Him selfe estraunging from their joyaunce vaine,
Whose fellowship seemd far unfitt for warlike swaine.

XXXVIII

So, having solaced themselves a space
With pleasaunce of the breathing fields yfed,
They backe retourned to the princely Place;
Whereas an errant knight in armes ycled,
And heathnish shield, wherein with letters red,
Was writt *Sansjoy*, they new arrived find:
Enflam'd with fury and fiers hardy hed,
He seemd in hart to harbour thoughts unkind,
And nourish bloody vengeaunce in his bitter mind.

XXXIX

Who, when the shamed shield of slaine Sansfoy
He spide with that same Faery champions page,
Bewraying[1] him that did of late destroy
His eldest brother; burning all with rage,
He to him lept, and that same envious gage[2]
Of victors glory from him snacht away:
But th' Elfin knight, which ought[3] that warlike wage,
Disdaind to loose the meed he wonne in fray:
And, him rencountring fierce, reskewd the noble pray.

XL

Therewith they gan to hurtlen greedily,
Redoubted battaile ready to darrayne,[4]
And clash their shields, and shake their swerds on hy,
That with their sturre they troubled all the traine;
Till that great Queene, upon eternall paine
Of high displeasure that ensewen might,
Commaunded them their fury to refraine;
And, if that either to that shield had right,
In equall lists they should the morrow next it fight.

XLI

'Ah, dearest Dame,' quoth then the Paynim bold,
'Pardon the error of enraged wight,
Whome great griefe made forgett the raines to hold
Of reasons rule, to see this recreaunt knight,
No knight, but treachour full of false despight

[1] **Bewraying**, revealing.
[2] **envious gage**, pledge that excited envy.
ought, owned.
[4] **darrayne**, prepare, or, fight out.

And shameful treason, who through guile hath slayn
The prowest [1] knight that ever field did fight,
Even stout Sansfoy, (O who can then refrayn?)
Whose shield he beares renverst,[2] the more to heap
disdayn.

XLII

'And, to augment the glorie of his guile,
His dearest love, the faire Fidessa, loe!
Is there possessed of the traytour vile;
Who reapes the harvest sowen by his foe,
Sowen in bloodie field, and bought with woe!
That brothers hand shall dearely well requight,
So be, O Queene! you equall favour showe.'
Him litle answerd th' angry Elfin knight;
He never meant with words, but swords, to plead his
right:

XLIII

But threw his gauntlet, as a sacred pledge
His cause in combat the next day to try:
So been they parted both, with harts on edge
To be aveng'd each on his enimy.
That night they pas in joy and jollity,
Feasting and courting both in bowre [3] and hall;
For Steward was excessive Gluttony,
That of his plenty poured forth to all:
Which doen, the Chamberlain, Slowth, did to rest
them call.

XLIV

Now whenas darkesome night had all displayd
Her coleblacke curtein over brightest skye;
The warlike youthes, on dayntie couches layd,

[1] **prowest**, bravest. [2] **renverst**, reversed.
[3] **bowre**, inner room.

Did chace away sweet sleepe from sluggish eye,
To muse on meanes of hoped victory.
But whenas Morpheus had with leaden mace
Arrested all that courtly company,
Uprose Duessa from her resting place,
And to the Paynims lodging comes with silent pace.

XLV

Whom broad awake she findes, in troublous fitt,
Fore-casting how his foe he might annoy;
And him amoves with speaches seeming fitt:
'Ah deare Sansjoy, next dearest to Sansfoy,
Cause of my new griefe, cause of my new joy;
Joyous to see his ymage in mine eye,
And greevd to thinke how foe did him destroy,
That was the flowre of grace and chevalrye;
Lo! his Fidessa, to thy secret faith I flye.'

XLVI

With gentle wordes he can her fayrely greet,
And bad say on the secrete of her hart:
Then, sighing soft; 'I learne that litle sweet
Oft tempred is,' (quoth she,) 'with muchell smart:
For since my brest was launcht with lovely dart
Of deare Sansfoy, I never joyed howre,
But in eternall woes my weaker hart
Have wasted, loving him with all my powre,
And for his sake have felt full many an heavie stowre.

XLVII

'At last, when perils all I weened past,
And hop'd to reape the crop of all my care,
Into new woes unweeting I was cast

By this false faytor,[1] who unworthie ware
His worthie shield, whom he with guilefull snare
Entrapped slew, and brought to shamefull grave:
Me, silly maid, away with him he bare,
And ever since hath kept in darksom cave,
For that I would not yeeld that to Sansfoy I gave.

XLVIII

'But since faire Sunne hath sperst that lowring clowd,
And̄ to my loathed life now shewes some light,
Under your beames I will me safely shrowd
From dreaded storme of his disdainfull spight:
To you th' inheritance belonges by right
Of brothers prayse, to you eke longes his love.
Let not his love, let not his restlesse spright,
Be unreveng'd, that calles to you above
From wandring Stygian shores, where it doth endlesse move.'

XLIX

Thereto said he, 'Faire Dame, be nought dismaid
For sorrowes past; their griefe is with them gone:
Ne yet of present perill be affraid,
For needlesse feare did never vantage none;
And helplesse hap it booteth not to mone.
Dead is Sansfoy, his vitall paines are past,
Though greeved ghost for vengeance deep do grone:
He lives that shall him pay his dewties last,
And guiltie Elfin blood shall sacrifice in hast.'

L

'O! but I feare the fickle freakes,' (quoth shee)
'Of fortune false, and oddes of armes in field.'

[1] **faytor**, deceiver.

'Why, dame,' (quoth he) 'what oddes can ever bee,
Where both doe fight alike, to win or yield?'
'Yea, but,' (quoth she) 'he beares a charmed shield,
And eke enchaunted armes, that none can perce;
Ne none can wound the man that does them wield.'
'Charmd or enchaunted,' answerd he then ferce,
'I no whitt reck,[1] ne you the like need to reherce.

LI

'But, faire Fidessa, sithens[2] fortunes guile,
Or enimies powre, hath now captived you,
Returne from whence ye came, and rest a while,
Till morrow next that I the Elfe subdew,
And with Sansfoyes dead dowry you endew.'
'Ah me! that is a double death,' (she said)
'With proud foes sight my sorrow to renew,
Where ever yet I be, my secret aide
Shall follow you.' So, passing forth, she him obaid.

CANTO V

The faithfull knight in equall field
Subdewes his faithlesse foe;
Whom false Duessa saves, and for
His cure to hell does goe.

I

THE noble hart that harbours vertuous thought,
And is with childe of glorious great intent,
Can never rest, untill it forth have brought
Th' eternall brood of glorie excellent:
Such restlesse passion did all night torment

[1] reck, heed. [2] sithens, since.

The flaming corage of that Faery knight,
Devizing how that doughtie turnament
With greatest honour he atchieven might:
Still did he wake, and still did watch for dawning light.

II

At last, the golden Orientall gate
Of greatest heaven gan to open fayre;
And Phoebus, fresh as brydegrome to his mate,
Came dauncing forth, shaking his deawie hayre,
And hurld his glistring beams through gloomy ayre.
Which when the wakeful Elfe perceiv'd, streight way,
He started up, and did him selfe prepayre
In sunbright armes, and battailous array;
For with that Pagan proud he combatt will that day.

III

And forth he comes into the commune hall;
Where earely waite him many a gazing eye,
To weet what end to straunger knights may fall.
There many Minstrales maken melody,
To drive away the dull melancholy;
And many Bardes, that to the trembling chord
Can tune their timely voices cunningly;
And many Chroniclers, that can record
Old loves, and warres for Ladies doen by many a Lord.

IV

Soone after comes the cruell Sarazin,
In woven maile all armed warily;
And sternly lookes at him, who not a pin
Does care for looke of living creatures eye.

They bring them wines of Greece and Araby,
And daintie spices fetch from furthest Ynd,[1]
To kindle heat of corage privily;
And in the wine a solemne oth they bynd
T' observe the sacred lawes of armes that are assynd.

V

At last forth comes that far renowmed Queene:
With royall pomp and princely majestie
She is ybrought unto a paled[2] greene,
And placed under stately canapee,
The warlike feates of both those knights to see.
On th' other side in all mens open vew
Duessa placed is, and on a tree
Sansfoy his shield is hangd with bloody hew;
Both those the lawrell girlonds to the victor dew.

VI

A shrilling trompett sownded from on hye,
And unto battaill bad them selves addresse:
Their shining shieldes about their wrestes they tye,
And burning blades about their heades doe blesse,[3]
The instruments of wrath and heavinesse.
With greedy force each other doth assayle,
And strike so fiercely, that they do impresse
Deepe dinted furrowes in the battred mayle:
The yron walles to ward their blowes are weak and fraile.

VII

The Sarazin was stout and wondrous strong,
And heaped blowes like yron hammers great;

[1] Ynd, India. [2] paled, surrounded by a palisade.
[3] blesse, brandish.

For after blood and vengeance he did long:
The knight was fiers, and full of youthly heat,
And doubled strokes, like dreaded thunders threat;
For all for praise and honour he did fight.
Both stricken stryke, and beaten both doe beat,
That from their shields forth flyeth firie light,
And hewen helmets deepe shew marks of eithers might.

VIII

So th' one for wrong, the other strives for right,
As when a Gryfon,[1] seized of his pray,
A Dragon fiers encountreth in his flight,
Through widest ayre making his ydle way,
That would his rightfull ravine rend away:
With hideous horror both together smight,
And souce [2] so sore that they the heavens affray;
The wise Southsayer, seeing so sad sight,
Th' amazed vulgar telles of warres and mortall fight.

IX

So th' one for wrong, the other strives for right,
And each to deadly shame would drive his foe:
The cruell steele so greedily doth bight
In tender flesh, that streames of blood down flow;
With which the armes, that earst [3] so bright did show,
Into a pure vermillion now are dyde.
Great ruth in all the gazers harts did grow,
Seeing the gored woundes to gape so wyde,
That victory they dare not wish to either side.

[1] **Gryfon**, griffin. [2] **souce**, swoop, attack.
[3] **earst**, first, previously.

X

At last the Paynim chaunst to cast his eye,
His suddein eye flaming with wrathfull fyre,
Upon his brothers shield, which hong thereby:
Therewith redoubled was his raging yre,
And said; 'Ah! wretched sonne of wofull syre,
Doest thou sit wayling by blacke Stygian lake,
Whylest here thy shield is hangd for victors hyre?
And, sluggish german,[1] doest thy forces slake[2]
To after-send his foe, that him may overtake?

XI

'Goe, caytive Elfe, him quickly overtake,
And soone redeeme from his long-wandring woe:
Goe, guiltie ghost, to him my message make,
That I his shield have quit from dying foe.'
Therewith upon his crest he stroke him so,
That twise he reeled, readie twise to fall:
End of the doubtfull battaile deemed tho
The lookers on; and lowd to him gan call
The false Duessa, 'Thine the shield, and I, and all!'

XII

Soone as the Faerie heard his Ladie speake,
Out of his swowning dreame he gan awake;
And quickning faith, that earst was woxen weake,
The creeping deadly cold away did shake:
Tho mov'd with wrath, and shame, and Ladies sake,
Of all attonce he cast avengd to be,
And with so' exceeding furie at him strake,

[1] **german**, relative = brother.
[2] **slake**, slack = relax.

That forced him to stoupe upon his knee:
Had he not stouped so, he should have cloven bee.

XIII

And to him said; 'Goe now, proud Miscreant,
Thyselfe thy message do to german deare;
Alone he, wandring, thee too long doth want:
Goe say, his foe thy shield with his doth beare.'
Therewith his heavie hand he high gan reare,
Him to have slaine; when lo! a darkesome clowd
Upon him fell: he no where doth appeare,
But vanisht is. The Elfe him calls alowd,
But answer none receives; the darknes him does shrowd.

XIV

In haste Duessa from her place arose,
And to him running said; 'O! prowest knight,
That ever Ladie to her love did chose,
Let now abate the terrour of your might,
And quench the flame of furious despight,
And bloodie vengeance: lo! th' infernall powres,
Covering your foe with cloud of deadly night,
Have borne him hence to Plutoes balefull bowres:
The conquest yours; I yours; the shield, and glory yours.'

XV

Not all so satisfide, with greedy eye
He sought all round about, his thristy blade
To bathe in blood of faithlesse enimy;
Who all that while lay hid in secret shade.
He standes amazed how he thence should fade:
At last the trumpets Triumph sound on hie;
And running Heralds humble homage made,

Greeting him goodly with new victorie,
And to him brought the shield, the cause of enmitie.

XVI

Wherewith he goeth to that soveraine Queene;
And falling her before on lowly knee,
To her makes present of his service seene:[1]
Which she accepts with thankes and goodly gree,[2]
Greatly advauncing his gay chevalree:
So marcheth home, and by her takes the knight,
Whom all the people followe with great glee,
Shouting, and clapping all their hands on hight,
That all the ayre it fills, and flyes to heaven bright.

XVII

Home is he brought, and layd in sumptous bed,
Where many skilfull leaches him abide
To salve his hurts, that yet still freshly bled.
In wine and oyle they wash his woundes wide,
And softly gan embalme on everie side:
And all the while most heavenly melody
About the bed sweet musicke did divide,[3]
Him to beguile of griefe and agony;
And all the while Duessa wept full bitterly.

XVIII

As when a wearie traveiler, that strayes
By muddy shore of broad seven-mouthed Nile,
Unweeting of the perillous wandring wayes,
Doth meete a cruell craftie Crocodile,
Which, in false griefe hyding his harmefull guile,
Doth weepe full sore, and sheddeth tender teares;

[1] seene, proved. [2] gree, favor. [3] divide, play.

The foolish man, that pities all this while
His mournefull plight, is swallowed up unwares,
Forgetfull of his owne that mindes an others cares.

XIX

So wept Duessa untill eventyde,
That shyning lampes in Joves high house were light;
Then forth she rose, ne lenger would abide,
But comes unto the place where th' Hethen knight,
In slombring swownd, nigh voyd of vitall spright,
Lay cover'd with inchaunted cloud all day:
Whom when she found, as she him left in plight,
To wayle his wofull case she would not stay,
But to the Easterne coast of heaven makes speedy way:

XX

Where griesly Night, with visage deadly sad,
That Phœbus chearefull face durst never vew,
And in a foule blacke pitchy mantle clad,
She findes forth comming from her darksome mew,[1]
Where she all day did hide her hated hew.
Before the dore her yron charet stood,
Already harnessed for journey new,
And cole blacke steedes yborne of hellish brood,
That on their rusty bits did champ as they were wood.

XXI

Who when she saw Duessa, sunny bright,
Adornd with gold and jewels shining cleare,
She greatly grew amazed at the sight,
And th' unacquainted light began to feare,
For never did such brightnes there appeare;
And would have backe retyred to her cave,

[1] mew, den.

Untill the witches speach she gan to heare,
Saying; 'Yet, O thou dreaded Dame! I crave
Abyde, till I have told the message which I have.'

XXII

She stayd; and foorth Duessa gan proceede:
'O! thou most auncient Grandmother[1] of all.
More old then Jove, whom thou at first didst breede,
Or that great house of Gods cælestiall,
Which wast begot in Dæmogorgons hall,[2]
And sawst the secrets of the world unmade.
Why suffredst thou thy Nephewes[3] deare to fall,
With Elfin sword most shamefully betrade?
Lo! where the stout Sansjoy doth sleepe in deadly shade.

XXIII

'And him before, I saw with bitter eyes
The bold Sansfoy shrinck underneath his speare:
And now the pray of fowles in field he lyes,
Nor wayld of friends, nor layd on groning beare,
That whylome was to me too dearely deare.
O! what of gods then boots it to be borne,
If old Aveugles sonnes so evill heare?
Or who shall not great Nightes children scorne,
When two of three her Nephewes are so fowle forlorne?

XXIV

'Up, then! up, dreary Dame, of darknes Queene!
Go, gather up the reliques of thy race;
Or else goe them avenge, and let be seene

[1] **Grandmother**, Night.

[2] **Dæmogorgons hall**, abode of Erebus, spouse of Night, in lower darkness.

[3] **Nephewes**, descendants.

That dreaded Night in brightest day hath place,
And can the children of fayre light deface.'
Her feeling speaches some compassion mov'd
In hart, and chaunge in that great mothers face:
Yet pitty in her hart was never prov'd
Till then, for evermore she hated, never lov'd:

XXV

And said, 'Deare daughter, rightly may I rew
The fall of famous children borne of mee,
And good successes which their foes ensew:
But who can turne the stream of destinee,
Or breake the chayne of strong necessitee,
Which fast is tyde to Joves eternall seat?
The sonnes of Day he favoureth, I see,
And by my ruines thinkes to make them great:
To make one great by others losse is bad excheat.[1]

XXVI

'Yet shall they not escape so freely all,
For some shall pay the price of others guilt;
And he the man that made Sansfoy to fall,
Shall with his owne blood price[2] that he hath spilt.
But what art thou, that telst of Nephews kilt?'
'I, that do seeme not I, Duessa ame,'
Quoth she, 'how ever now, in garments gilt
And gorgeous gold arayd, I to thee came,
Duessa I, the daughter of Deceipt and Shame.'

XXVII

Then, bowing downe her aged backe, she kist
The wicked witch, saying, 'In that fayre face

[1] **excheat**, profit. [2] **price**, pay for.

The false resemblaunce of Deceipt, I wist,
Did closely lurke; yet so true-seeming grace
It carried, that I scarse in darksome place
Could it discerne, though I the mother bee
Of falshood, and roote of Duessaes race.
O welcome, child! whom I have longd to see,
And now have seene unwares. Lo! now I goe with thee.'

XXVIII

Then to her yron wagon she betakes,
And with her beares the fowle welfavourd witch.
Through mirkesome aire her ready way she makes:
Her twyfold Teme, of which two blacke as pitch,
And two were browne, yet each to each unlich,[1]
Did softly swim away, ne ever stamp
Unlesse she chaunst their stubborne mouths to twitch;
Then, foming tarre, their bridles they would champ,
And trampling the fine element would fiercely ramp.

XXIX

So well they sped, that they be come at length
Unto the place whereas the Paynim lay,
Devoid of outward sence and native strength,
Coverd with charmed cloud from vew of day,
And sight of men, since his late luckelesse fray.
His cruell wounds, with cruddy bloud congeald,
They binden up so wisely as they may,
And handle softly, till they can be heald:
So lay him in her charett, close in night conceald.

[1] unlich, unlike.

XXX

And, all the while she stood upon the ground,
The wakefull dogs did never cease to bay,
As giving warning of th' unwonted sound,
With which her yron wheeles did them affray,
And her darke griesly looke them much dismay:
The messenger of death, the ghastly owle,
With drery shriekes did also her bewray;
And hungry wolves continually did howle
At her abhorred face, so filthy and so fowle.

XXXI

Thence turning backe in silence softe they stole,
And brought the heavy corse with easy pace
To yawning gulfe of deepe Avernus hole.
By that same hole an entraunce, darke and bace,
With smoake and sulphur hiding all the place,
Descends to hell: there creature never past,
That backe retourned without heavenly grace;
But dreadfull Furies, which their chaines have brast,
And damned sprights sent forth to make ill men aghast.

XXXII

By that same way the direfull dames doe drive
Their mournefull charett, fild with rusty blood,
And downe to Plutoes house are come bilive:
Which passing through, on every side them stood
The trembling ghosts with sad amazed mood,
Chattring their iron teeth, and staring wide
With stony eies; and all the hellish brood
Of feends infernall flockt on every side,
To gaze on erthly wight that with the Night durst ride.

XXXIII

They pas the bitter waves of Acheron,[1]
Where many soules sit wailing woefully,
And come to fiery flood of Phlegeton,[2]
Whereas the damned ghosts in torments fry,
And with sharp shrilling shriekes doe bootlesse cry,
Cursing high Jove, the which them thither sent.
The house of endlesse paine is built thereby,
In which ten thousand sorts of punishment
The cursed creatures doe eternally torment.

XXXIV

Before the threshold dreadfull Cerberus[3]
His three deformed heads did lay along,
Curled with thousand adders venemous,
And lilled forth his bloody flaming tong:
At them he gan to reare his bristles strong,
And felly gnarre,[4] untill Dayes enemy
Did him appease; then downe his taile he hong,
And suffered them to passen quietly;
For she in hell and heaven had power equally.

XXXV

There was Ixion[5] turned on a wheele,
For daring tempt the Queene of heaven to sin;
And Sisyphus an huge round stone did reele
Against an hill, ne might from labour lin;

[1] **Acheron**, river of woe, in Hades.
[2] **Phlegeton**, river of fire, in Hades.
[3] **Cerberus**, watch-dog, in Hades.
[4] **felly gnarre**, cruelly snarled.
[5] **Ixion**, **Sisyphus**, **Tantalus**, and **Tityus** were Greek characters punished for offences against the gods.

There thristy Tantalus hong by the chin;
And Tityus fed a vultur on his maw;
Typhœus [1] joynts were stretched on a gin;
Theseus [2] condemned to endlesse slouth by law;
And fifty sisters [3] water in leke vessels draw.

XXXVI

They all, beholding worldly wights in place,
Leave off their worke, unmindfull of their smart,
To gaze on them; who forth by them doe pace,
Till they be come unto the furthest part;
Where was a Cave ywrought by wondrous art.
Deepe, darke, uneasy, dolefull, comfortlesse.
In which sad Aesculapius [4] far apart
Emprisond was in chaines remedilesse;
For that Hippolytus rent corse he did redresse.

XXXVII

Hippolytus a jolly huntsman was,
That wont in charett chace the foming bore:
He all his Peeres in beauty did surpas,
But Ladies love as losse of time forbore:
His wanton stepdame loved him the more;
But, when she saw her offred sweets refusd,
Her love she turnd to hate, and him before

[1] **Typhœus**, a monster with a hundred heads. "Spenser transfers to T. the punishment of the bed of Procrustes, or of the mediæval rack." — Percival.

[2] **Theseus**, the Athenian hero, who attempted to carry Persephone from Hades.

[3] **fifty sisters**, the Danaides, who at the instigation of their father slew their husbands. Correctly, forty-nine, for one daughter disobeyed.

[4] **Aesculapius**, god of medicine.

His father fierce of treason false accusd,
And with her gealous termes his open eares abusd:

XXXVIII

Who, all in rage, his Sea-god syre besought
Some cursed vengeaunce on his sonne to cast.
From surging gulf two Monsters streight were brought,
With dread whereof his chacing steedes aghast
Both charett swifte and huntsman overcast:
His goodly corps, on ragged cliffs yrent,
Was quite dismembred, and his members chast
Scattered on every mountaine as he went,
That of Hippolytus was lefte no moniment.

XXXIX

His cruell step-dame, seeing what was donne,
Her wicked daies with wretched knife did end,
In death avowing th' innocence of her sonne.
Which hearing, his rash syre began to rend
His heare, and hasty tong that did offend:
Tho, gathering up the reliques of his smart,
By Dianes meanes, who was Hippolyts frend,
Them brought to Aesculape, that by his art
Did heale them all againe, and joyned every part.

XL

Such wondrous science in mans witt to rain
When Jove avizd, that could the dead revive,
And fates expired could renew again,
Of endlesse life he might him not deprive,
But unto hell did thrust him downe alive,
With flashing thunderbolt ywounded sore:

Where, long remaining, he did alwaies strive
Himselfe with salves to health for to restore,
And slake the heavenly fire that raged evermore.

XLI

There auncient Night arriving did alight
From her nigh weary wayne, and in her armes
To Aesculapius brought the wounded knight:
Whome having softly disaraid of armes,
Tho gan to him discover all his harmes,
Beseeching him with prayer and with praise,
If either salves, or oyles, or herbes, or charmes,
A fordonne wight from dore of death mote raise,
He would at her request prolong her nephews daies.

XLII

'Ah Dame,' (quoth he) 'thou temptest me in vaine,
To dare the thing, which daily yet I rew,
And the old cause of my continued paine
With like attempt to like end to renew.
Is not enough, that, thrust from heaven dew,
Here endlesse penaunce for one fault I pay,
But that redoubled crime with vengeaunce new
Thou biddest me to eeke?[1] Can Night defray
The wrath of thundring Jove, that rules both night and day?'

XLIII

'Not so,' (quoth she) 'but, sith that heavens king
From hope of heaven hath thee excluded quight,
Why fearest thou, that canst not hope for thing;
And fearest not that more thee hurten might,

[1] **eeke**, increase.

Now in the powre of everlasting Night?
Goe to then, O thou far renowmed sonne
Of great Apollo! shew thy famous might
In medicine, that els hath to thee wonne
Great pains, and greater praise, both never to be donne.'

XLIV

Her words prevaild: And then the learned leach
His cunning hand gan to his wounds to lay,
And all things els the which his art did teach:
Which having seene, from thence arose away
The mother of dredd darknesse, and let stay
Aveugles sonne there in the leaches cure;
And, backe retourning, took her wonted way
To ronne her timely race, whilst Phoebus pure
In westerne waves his weary wagon did recure.[1]

XLV

The false Duessa, leaving noyous Night,
Returnd to stately pallace of Dame Pryde:
Where when she came, she found the Faery knight
Departed thence; albee his woundes wyde
Not throughly heald unready were to ryde.
Good cause he had to hasten thence away;
For on a day his wary Dwarfe had spyde
Where in a dungeon deepe huge nombers lay
Of caytive wretched thralls, that wayled night and day:

XLVI

A ruefull sight as could be seene with eie,
Of whom he learned had in secret wise

[1] recure, recover = refresh.

The hidden cause of their captivitie ;
How mortgaging their lives to Covetise,
Through wastfull Pride and wanton Riotise,
They were by law of that proud Tyrannesse,
Provokt with Wrath and Envyes false surmise,
Condemned to that Dongeon mercilesse,
Where they should live in wo, and dye in wretchednesse.

XLVII

There was that great proud king of Babylon,[1]
That would compell all nations to adore,
And him as onely God to call upon ;
Till, through celestiall doome thrown out of dore,
Into an Oxe he was transformd of yore.
There also was king Crœsus,[2] that enhaunst
His hart too high through his great richesse store ;
And proud Antiochus,[3] the which advaunst
His cursed hand gainst God, and on his altares daunst.

XLVIII

And them long time before, great Nimrod[4] was,
That first the world with sword and fire warrayd ;
And after him old Ninus[5] far did pas
In princely pomp, of all the world obayd.
There also was that mightie Monarch[6] layd

[1] **king of Babylon**, Nebuchadnezzar, died B. C. 561. Compare Dan. iv : 32.

[2] **Crœsus**, King of Lydia about 569 B. C.

[3] **Antiochus**, King of Syria, about 165 B. C., who captured Jerusalem twice.

[4] **Nimrod**, "a mighty hunter," descendant of Noah.

[5] **Ninus**, mythical founder of Nineveh.

[6] **mightie Monarch**, Alexander the Great. "Spenser doubtless refers to the opinion that he died of drinking." — Kitchin.

Low under all, yet above all in pride,
That name of native syre did fowle upbrayd,
And would as Ammons[1] sonne be magnifide,
Till, scornd of God and man, a shamefull death he
dide.

XLIX

All these together in one heape were throwne,
Like carkases of beastes in butchers stall.
And in another corner wide were strowne
The Antique ruins of the Romanes fall;
Great Romulus,[2] the Grandsyre of them all;
Proud Tarquin, and too lordly Lentulus;
Stout Scipio, and stubborne Hanniball;
Ambitious Sylla, and sterne Marius;
High Caesar, great Pompey, and fiers Antonius.

L

Amongst these mightie men were wemen mixt,
Proud wemen, vaine, forgetfull of their yoke:
The bold Semiramis,[3] whose sides transfixt
With sonnes own blade her fowle reproches spoke:
Fayre Sthenobœa,[4] that her selfe did choke
With wilfull chord for wanting of her will;
High minded Cleopatra, that with stroke
Of Aspes sting her selfe did stoutly kill;
And thousands moe the like that did that dongeon
fill.

[1] **Ammons** = Jupiter Ammon's.

[2] **Romulus**, etc. These are names that should be familiar to every student. The chief point in Spenser's introduction of them is that they all died violent or wretched deaths.

[3] **Semiramis**, Queen of Assyria, B. C. 1250 (?).

[4] **Sthenobœa**, wife of Prœtus, in Greek mythology She really died of poison.

LI

Besides the endlesse routes of wretched thralles,
Which thither were assembled day by day
From all the world, after their wofull falles,
Through wicked pride and wasted welthes decay.
But most of all, which in that dongeon lay,
Fell from high Princes courtes, or Ladies bowres,
Where they in ydle pomp, or wanton play,
Consumed had their goods and thriftlesse howres,
And lastly thrown themselves into these heavy stowres.

LII

Whose case whenas the careful Dwarfe had tould,
And made ensample of their mournful sight
Unto his Maister, he no lenger would
There dwell in perill of like painefull plight,
But earely rose; and, ere that dawning light
Discovered had the world to heaven wyde,
He by a privy Posterne [1] tooke his flight,
That of no envious eyes he mote be spyde;
For, doubtlesse, death ensewd if any him descryde.

LIII

Scarse could he footing find in that fowle way,
For many corses, like a great Lay-stall,[2]
Of murdred men, which therein strowed lay
Without remorse or decent funerall;
Which al through that great Princesse pride did fall,
And came to shamefull end. And them besyde,

[1] **Posterne**, door, or small gate.
[2] **Lay-stall**, dunghill.

Forth ryding underneath the castell wall,
A Donghill of dead carcases he spyde;
The dreadfull spectacle of that sad house of Pryde.

CANTO VI

From lawlesse lust by wondrous grace
Fayre Una is releast:
Whom salvage nation does adore,
And learnes her wise beheast.

I

As when a ship, that flyes fayre under sayle,
An hidden rocke escaped hath unwares,
That lay in waite her wrack for to bewaile,
The Marriner yet halfe amazed stares
At perill past, and yet in doubt ne dares
To joy at his foolhappie oversight:
So doubly is distrest twixt joy and cares
The dreadlesse corage of this Elfin knight,
Having escapt so sad ensamples in his sight.

II

Yet sad he was, that his too hastie speed
The fayre Duess' had forst him leave behind;
And yet more sad, that Una, his deare dreed,
Her truth had staynd with treason so unkind:
Yet cryme in her could never creature find;
But for his love, and for her own selfe sake,
She wandred had from one to other Ynd,
Him for to seeke, ne ever would forsake.
Till her unwares the fiers Sansloy did overtake:

. . . . . .

VI

The pitteous mayden, carefull, comfortlesse,
Does throw out thrilling shriekes, and shrieking cryes,
The last vaine helpe of wemens great distresse,
And with loud plaintes importuneth the skyes,
That molten starres doe drop like weeping eyes;
And Phœbus, flying so most shamefull sight,
His blushing face in foggy cloud implyes,
And hydes for shame. What witt of mortal wight
Can now devise to quitt a thrall from such a plight?

VII

Eternall providence, exceeding thought,
Where none appeares can make her selfe a way.
A wondrous way it for this Lady wrought,
From Lyons clawes to pluck the gryped pray.
Her shrill outcryes and shrieks so loud did bray,
That all the woodes and forestes did resownd:
A troupe of Faunes [1] and Satyres [2] far away
Within the wood were dauncing in a rownd,[3]
Whiles old Sylvanus [4] slept in shady arber sownd:

VIII

Who, when they heard that pitteous strained voice,
In haste forsooke their rurall meriment,
And ran towardes the far rebownded noyce,
To weet what wight so loudly did lament.

[1] **Faunes**, rustic beings, half man and half goat, in Roman mythology.

[2] **Satyres**, deities of the woods and fields, in Greek mythology, similar to the fauns.

[3] **rownd**, a circular dance.

[4] **Sylvanus**, god of the forests and fields.

Unto the place they come incontinent: [1]
Whom when the raging Sarazin espyde,
A rude, mishapen, monstrous rablement,
Whose like he never saw, he durst not byde,
But got his ready steed, and fast away gan ryde.

IX

The wyld woodgods, arrived in the place,
There find the virgin, doolfull, desolate,
With ruffled rayments, and fayre blubbred face,
As her outrageous foe had left her late;
And trembling yet through feare of former hate.
All stand amazed at so uncouth sight,
And gin to pittie her unhappie state:
All stand astonied at her beautie bright,
In their rude eyes unworthie of so wofull plight.

X

She, more amazd, in double dread doth dwell;
And every tender part for feare does shake.
As when a greedy Wolfe, through honger fell,
A seely Lamb far from the flock does take,
Of whom he meanes his bloody feast to make,
A Lyon spyes fast running towards him,
The innocent pray in hast he does forsake;
Which, quitt from death, yet quakes in every lim
With chaunge of feare, to see the Lyon looke so grim.

XI

Such fearefull fitt assaid her trembling hart,
Ne word to speake, ne joynt to move, she had;
The salvage nation feele her secret smart,

[1] **incontinent**, without delay.

And read her sorrow in her count'nance sad;
Their frowning forheades, with rough hornes yclad,
And rustick horror, all asyde doe lay;
And, gently grenning, shew a semblance glad
To comfort her; and, feare to put away,
Their backward bent knees teach her humbly to obay.

XII

The doubtfull Damzell dare not yet committ
Her single person to their barbarous truth;
But still twixt feare and hope amazd does sitt,
Late learnd what harme to hasty trust ensu'th.
They, in compassion of her tender youth,
And wonder of her beautie soverayne,
Are wonne with pitty and unwonted ruth;
And, all prostrate upon the lowly playne,
Doe kisse her feete, and fawne on her with count'nance fayne

XIII

Their harts she ghesseth by their humble guise,
And yieldes her to extremitie of time:
So from the ground she fearelesse doth arise,
And walketh forth without suspect of crime.
They, all as glad as birdes of joyous Pryme,
Thence lead her forth, about her dauncing round,
Shouting, and singing all a shepheards ryme;
And with greene braunches strowing all the ground,
Do worship her as Queene with olive girlond crownd.

XIV

And all the way their merry pipes they sound.
That all the woods with doubled Eccho ring;
And with their horned feet doe weare the ground,

Leaping like wanton kids in pleasant Spring.
So towards old Sylvanus they her bring;
Who, with the noyse awaked, commeth out
To weet the cause, his weake steps governing
And aged limbs on cypresse stadle [1] stout;
And with an yvie twyne his waste is girt about.

XV

Far off he wonders what them makes so glad;
Or Bacchus merry fruit they did invent,[2]
Or Cybeles [3] franticke rites have made them mad:
They, drawing nigh, unto their God present
That flowre of fayth and beautie excellent.
The God himselfe, vewing that mirrhour rare,
Stood long amazd, and burnt in his intent:
His owne fayre Dryope [4] now he thinkes not faire,
And Pholoe [5] fowle, when her to this he doth compaire.

XVI

The woodborne people fall before her flat,
And worship her as Goddesse of the wood;
And old Sylvanus selfe bethinkes not what
To thinke of wight so fayre, but gazing stood
In doubt to deeme her borne of earthly brood:
Sometimes dame Venus selfe he seemes to see;
But Venus never had so sober mood:
Sometimes Diana he her takes to be,
But misseth bow and shaftes, and buskins to her knee.

[1] **stadle**, staff.
[2] **invent**, find.
[3] **Cybele**, mother of the gods.
[4] **Dryope**, wife of Sylvanus.
[5] **Pholoë**, a nymph.

XVII

By vew of her he ginneth to revive
His ancient love, and dearest Cyparisse ;[1]
And calles to mind his pourtraiture alive,
How fayre he was, and yet not fayre to this;
And how he slew with glauncing dart amisse
A gentle Hynd, the which the lovely boy
Did love as life, above all worldly blisse ;
For griefe whereof the lad n'ould after joy,
But pynd away in anguish and selfe-wild annoy.

XVIII

The wooddy nymphes, faire Hamadryades,
Her to behold do thither runne apace ;
And all the troupe of light-foot Naiades[2]
Flocke all about to see her lovely face ;
But, when they vewed have her heavenly grace,
They envy her in their malitious mind,
And fly away for feare of fowle disgrace.
But all the Satyres scorne their woody kind,
And henceforth nothing faire but her on earth they find.

XIX

Glad of such lucke, the luckelesse lucky mayd
Did her content to please their feeble eyes,
And long time with that salvage people stayd,
To gather breath in many miseryes.
During which time her gentle wit she plyes
To teach them truth, which worshipt her in vaine,

[1] **Cyparisse**, a youth, loved by Sylvanus, turned at his death to a cypress.

[2] **Naiades**, nymphs, presiding over brooks and fountains.

And made her th' Image of Idolatryes;
But when their bootlesse zeale she did restrayne
From her own worship, they her Asse would worship fayn.

XX

It fortuned, a noble warlike knight
By just occasion to that forrest came
To seeke his kindred, and the lignage right
From whence he tooke his weldeserved name:
He had in armes abroad wonne muchell fame,
And fild far landes with glorie of his might;
Plaine, faithfull, true, and enimy of shame,
And ever lov'd to fight for Ladies right;
But in vaine glorious frayes he litle did delight.

XXI

A Satyres sonne, yborne in forrest wyld,
By straunge adventure as it did betyde,
And there begotten of a Lady myld,
Fayre Thyamis, the daughter of Labryde;
That was in sacred bandes of wedlocke tyde
To Therion, a loose unruly swayne,
Who had more joy to raunge the forrest wyde,
And chase the salvage beast with busie payne,
Then serve his Ladies love, and waste in pleasures vayne.

. . . . . .

XXIV

For all he taught the tender ymp was but
To banish cowardize and bastard[1] feare:
His trembling hand he would him force to put

[1] bastard, base.

Upon the Lyon and the rugged Beare;
And from the she Beares teats her whelps to teare;
And eke wyld roring Buls he would him make
To tame, and ryde their backes, not made to beare;
And the Robuckes in flight to overtake,
That everie beast for feare of him did fly, and quake.

XXV

Thereby so fearlesse and so fell he grew,
That his own syre, and maister of his guise,[1]
Did often tremble at his horrid vew;
And oft, for dread of hurt, would him advise
The angry beastes not rashly to despise,
Nor too much to provoke; for he would learne
The Lyon stoup to him in lowly wise,
(A lesson hard) and make the Libbard[2] sterne
Leave roaring, when in rage he for revenge did earne.

XXVI

And for to make his powre approved more,
Wyld beastes in yron yokes he would compell;
The spotted Panther, and the tusked Bore,
The Pardale[3] swift, and the Tigre cruell,
The Antelope, and Wolfe both fiers and fell;
And them constraine in equall teme to draw.
Such joy he had their stubborne harts to quell,
And sturdie courage tame with dreadfull aw,
That his beheast they feared as a tyrans law.

XXVII

His loving mother came upon a day
Unto the woodes, to see her little sonne;

[1] **guise**, custom. [2] **Libbard**, leopard. [3] **Pardale**, panther.

And chaunst unwares to meet him in the way,
After his sportes and cruell pastime donne;
When after him a Lyonesse did runne,
That roaring all with rage did lowd requere
Her children deare, whom he away had wonne:
The Lyon whelpes she saw how he did beare,
And lull in rugged armes withouten childish feare.

XXVIII

The fearefull Dame all quaked at the sight,
And turning backe gan fast to fly away;
Untill, with love revokt from vaine affright,
She hardly yet perswaded was to stay,
And then to him these womanish words gan say:
'Ah Satyrane, my dearling and my joy,
For love of me leave off this dreadfull play;
To dally thus with death is no fit toy:
Go, find some other play-fellowes, mine own sweet boy.'

XXIX

In these and like delightes of bloody game
He trayned was, till ryper years he raught;[1]
And there abode, whylst any beast of name
Walkt in that forrest, whom he had not taught
To feare his force: and then his courage haught[2]
Desyrd of forreine foemen to be knowne,
And far abroad for straunge adventures sought;
In which his might was never overthrowne;
But through al Faery lond his famous worth was blown.

[1] raught, reached.
[2] haught, high.

XXX

Yet evermore it was his maner faire,
After long labours and adventures spent,
Unto those native woods for to repaire,
To see his syre and ofspring auncient.
And now he thither came for like intent;
Where he unwares the fairest Una found,
Straunge Lady in so straunge habiliment,
Teaching the Satyres, which her sat around,
Trew sacred lore, which from her sweet lips did redound.

XXXI

He wondred at her wisedome hevenly rare,
Whose like in womens witt he never knew;
And, when her curteous deeds he did compare,
Gan her admire, and her sad sorrowes rew,
Blaming of Fortune, which such troubles threw,
And joyd to make proofe of her cruelty
On gentle Dame, so hurtlesse [1] and so trew:
Thenceforth he kept her goodly company,
And learnd her discipline of faith and verity.

XXXII

But she, all vowd unto the Redcrosse Knight,
His wandring perill closely did lament,
Ne in this new acquaintaunce could delight;
But her deare heart with anguish did torment,
And all her witt in secret counsels spent,
How to escape. At last in privy wise
To Satyrane she shewed her intent;

[1] **hurtlesse, innocent.**

Who, glad to gain such favour, gan devise,
How with that pensive Maid he best might thence arise.

XXXIII

So on a day, when Satyres all were gone
To do their service to Sylvanus old,
The gentle virgin, left behinde alone,
He led away with corage stout and bold.
Too late it was to Satyres to be told,
Or ever hope recover her againe:
In vaine he seekes that having cannot hold.
So fast he carried her with carefull paine,
That they the woods are past, and come now to the plaine.

XXXIV

The better part now of the lingring day
They traveild had, whenas they far espide
A weary wight forwandring by the way;
And towards him they gan in haste to ride,
To weete of newes that did abroad betide,
Or tidings of her knight of the Redcrosse;
But he them spying gan to turne aside
For feare, as seemd, or for some feigned losse:
More greedy they of newes fast towards him do crosse.

XXXV

A silly man, in simple weeds forworne,
And soild with dust of the long dried way;
His sandales were with toilsome travell torne,
And face all tand with scorching sunny ray,
As he had traveild many a sommers day

Through boyling sands of Arabie and Ynde,
And in his hand a Jacobs staffe,[1] to stay
His weary limbs upon ; and eke behind
His scrip[2] did hang, in which his needments he did bind.

XXXVI

The knight, approching nigh, of him inquerd
Tidings of warre, and of adventures new ;
But warres, nor new adventures, none he herd.
Then Una gan to aske, if ought he knew,
Or heard abroad of that her champion trew,
That in his armour bare a croslet red ?
'Ay me ! Deare dame,' (quoth he) 'well may I rew
To tell the sad sight which mine eies have red ;
These eies did see that knight both living and eke ded.'

XXXVII

That cruell word her tender hart so thrild,
That suddein cold did ronne through every vaine,
And stony horrour all her sences fild
With dying fitt, that downe she fell for paine.
The knight her lightly reared up againe,
And comforted with curteous kind reliefe :
Then, wonne from death, she bad him tellen plaine
The further processe of her hidden griefe :
The lesser pangs can beare who hath endur'd the chief.

XXXVIII

Then gan the Pilgrim thus : 'I chaunst this day,
This fatall day that shall I ever rew,

[1] **Jacobs staffe**, pilgrim's staff. St. James (Lat. Jacobus) is usually represented with a staff.

[2] **scrip**, a small bag, also characteristic of the pilgrim.

To see two knights, in travell on my way,
(A sory sight) arraung'd in batteill new,
Both breathing vengeaunce, both of wrathfull hew.
My feareful flesh did tremble at their strife,
To see their blades so greedily imbrew,
That, dronke with blood, yet thristed after life:
What more? the Redcrosse knight was slain with Paynim knife.'

XXXIX

Ah! dearest Lord,' (quoth she) 'how might that bee,
And he the stoutest knight that ever wonne?'
'Ah! dearest dame,' (quoth hee) 'how might I see
The thing that might not be, and yet was donne?'
'Where is,' (said Satyrane) 'that Paynims sonne,
That him of life, and us of joy, hath refte?'
'Not far away,' (quoth he) 'he hence doth wonne,[1]
Foreby a fountaine, where I late him lefte
Washing his bloody wounds, that through the steele were cleft.'

XL

Therewith the knight thence marched forth in hast,
Whiles Una, with huge heavinesse opprest,
Could not for sorrow follow him so fast;
And soone he came, as he the place had ghest,
Whereas that Pagan proud him selfe did rest
In secret shadow by a fountaine side:
Even he it was, that earst would have supprest
Faire Una; whom when Satyrane espide,
With foule reprochfull words he boldly him defide.

[1] wonne, dwell.

XLI

And said; 'Arise, thou cursed Miscreaunt,
That hast with knightlesse guile, and trecherous train,
Faire knighthood fowly shamed, and doest vaunt
That good knight of the Redcrosse to have slain:
Arise, and with like treason now maintain
Thy guilty wrong, or els thee guilty yield.'
The Sarazin, this hearing, rose amain,[1]
And, catching up in hast his three-square[2] shield
And shining helmet, soone him buckled to the field.

XLII

And, drawing nigh him, said; 'Ah! misborn Elfe,
In evill houre thy foes thee hither sent
Anothers wrongs to wreak upon thy selfe:
Yet ill thou blamest me for having blent
My name with guile and traiterous intent:
That Redcrosse knight, perdie,[3] I never slew;
But had he beene where earst his armes were lent,
Th' enchaunter vaine his errour should not rew:
But thou his errour shalt, I hope, now proven trew.'

XLIII

Therewith they gan, both furious and fell,
To thunder blowes, and fiersly to assaile
Each other, bent his enimy to quell,
That with their force they perst both plate and maile,

[1] amain, violently
[2] three-square, trianguiar.
[3] perdie, truly.

And made wide furrowes in their fleshes fraile,
That it would pitty any living eie.
Large floods of blood adowne their sides did raile;[1]
But floods of blood could not them satisfie:
Both hongred after death; both chose to win, or die.

XLIV

So long they fight, and full revenge pursue,
That, fainting, each themselves to breathen lett,
And, ofte refreshed, battell oft renue.
As when two Bores, with rancling malice mett,
Their gory sides fresh bleeding fiercely frett;
Til breathlesse both themselves aside retire,
Where foming wrath their cruell tuskes they whett,
And trample th' earth, the whiles they may respire,
Then backe to fight againe, new breathed and entire.

XLV

So fiersly, when these knights had breathed once,
They gan to fight retourne, increasing more
Their puissant force, and cruell rage attonce,
With heaped strokes more hugely then before;
That with their drery wounds, and bloody gore,
They both, deformed, scarsely could bee known.
By this, sad Una fraught with anguish sore,
Led with their noise which through the aire was thrown,
Arriv'd wher they in erth their fruitles blood had sown

XLVI

Whom all so soone as that proud Sarazin
Espide, he gan revive the memory

[1] raile, flow.

Of his leud lusts, and late attempted sin,
And lefte the doubtfull battell hastily,
To catch her, newly offred to his eie;
But Satyrane, with strokes him turning, staid,
And sternely bad him other businesse plie
Then hunt the steps of pure unspotted Maid:
Wherewith he al enrag'd these bitter speaches said.

XLVII

'O foolish faeries sonne! what fury mad
Hath thee incenst to hast thy dolefull fate?
Were it not better I that Lady had
Then that thou hadst repented it too late?
Most sencelesse man he, that himselfe doth hate,
To love another: Lo! then, for thine ayd,
Here take thy lovers token on thy pate.'
So they to fight; the whiles the royall Mayd
Fledd farre away, of that proud Paynim sore afrayd.

XLVIII

But that false Pilgrim, which that leasing[1] told,
Being in deed old Archimage, did stay
In secret shadow all this to behold;
And much rejoyced in their bloody fray:
But, when he saw the Damsell passe away,
He left his stond, and her pursewd apace,
In hope to bring her to her last decay.
But for to tell her lamentable cace,
And eke this battels end, will need another place.

[1] leasing. lie.

CANTO VII

The Redcrosse knight is captive made
By Gyaunt proud opprest:
Prince Arthure meets with Una greatly with those newes distrest.

I

WHAT man so wise, what earthly witt so ware,
As to discry the crafty cunning traine,
By which deceipt doth maske in visour[1] faire,
And cast her coulours, died deepe in graine,[2]
To seeme like truth, whose shape she well can faine,
And fitting gestures to her purpose frame,
The guiltlesse man with guile to entertaine?
Great maistresse of her art was that false Dame,
The false Duessa, cloked with Fidessaes name.

II

Who when, returning from the drery Night,
She fownd not in that perilous hous of Pryde,
Where she had left the noble Redcrosse knight,
Her hoped pray, she would no lenger byde,
But forth she went to seeke him far and wide.
Ere long she fownd, whereas he wearie sate
To reste him selfe foreby[3] a fountaine syde,
Disarmed all of yron-coted Plate;
And by his side his steed the grassy forage ate.

III

Hee reedes upon the cooling shade, and bayes[4]
His sweatie forehead in the breathing wynd,

[1] visour, head-piece used for disguise.
[2] died deepe in graine, dyed in fast colors.
[3] foreby, near.
[4] bayes, bathes.

Which through the trembling leaves full gently playes,
Wherein the chearefull birds of sundry kynd
Doe chaunt sweet musick to delight his mynd.
The witch approching gan him fayrely greet,
And with reproch of carelesnes unkynd
Upbrayd, for leaving her in place unmeet,
With fowle words tempring faire, soure gall with hony sweet.

IV

Unkindnesse past, they gan of solace treat,
And bathe in pleasaunce of the joyous shade,
Which shielded them against the boyling heat,
And with greene boughes decking a gloomy glade,
About the fountaine like a girlond made;
Whose bubbling wave did ever freshly well,
Ne ever would through fervent sommer fade:
The sacred Nymph, which therein wont to dwell,
Was out of Dianes favor, as it then befell.

V

The cause was this: one day, when Phœbe fayre
With all her band was following the chace,
This nymph, quite tyr'd with heat of scorching ayre,
Satt downe to rest in middest of the race:
The goddesse wroth gan fowly her disgrace,
And badd the waters, which from her did flow,
Be such as she her selfe was then in place.
Thenceforth her waters wexed dull and slow,
And all that drinke thereof do faint and feeble grow.

VI

Hereof this gentle knight unweeting was;
And lying downe upon the sandie graile,[1]

[1] graile, gravel.

Dronke of the streame, as cleare as christall glas:
Eftsoones his manly forces gan to fayle,
And mightie strong was turnd to feeble frayle.
His chaunged powres at first them selves not felt;
Till crudled cold his corage gan assayle,
And cheareful blood in fayntnes chill did melt,
Which like a fever fit through all his bodie swelt.[1]

VII

Yet goodly court he made still to his Dame,
Pourd out in loosnesse on the grassy grownd,
Both carelesse of his health, and of his fame;
Till at the last he heard a dreadfull sownd,
Which through the wood loud bellowing did rebownd,
That all the earth for terror seemd to shake,
And trees did tremble. Th' Elfe, therewith astownd,
Upstarted lightly from his looser make,[2]
And his unready weapons gan in hand to take.

VIII

But ere he could his armour on him dight,
Or gett his shield, his monstrous enimy
With sturdie steps came stalking in his sight,
An hideous Geaunt, horrible and hye,
That with his tallnesse seemd to threat the skye;
The ground eke groned under him for dreed:
His living like saw never living eye,
Ne durst behold: his stature did exceed
The hight of three the tallest sonnes of mortall seed.

. . . . . .

[1] swelt, burned. [2] make, mate.

X

So growen great, through arrogant delight
Of th' high descent whereof he was yborne,
And through presumption of his matchlesse might,
All other powres and knighthood he did scorne.
Such now he marcheth to this man forlorne,
And left to losse ;[1] his stalking steps are stayde
Upon a snaggy Oke, which he had torne
Out of his mothers bowelles, and it made
His mortall mace, wherewith his foemen he dismayde.

XI

That, when the knight he spyde, he gan advaunce
With huge force and insupportable mayne,[2]
And towardes him with dreadfull fury praunce ;
Who haplesse, and eke hopelesse, all in vaine
Did to him pace sad battaile to darrayne,
Disarmd, disgraste, and inwardly dismayde ;
And eke so faint in every joynt and vayne,
Through that fraile fountain which him feeble made,
That scarsely could he weeld his bootlesse single blade.

XII

The Geaunt strooke so maynly mercilesse,
That could have overthrowne a stony towre ;
And, were not hevenly grace that did him blesse,
He had beene pouldred all as thin as flowre :
But he was wary of that deadly stowre,
And lightly lept from underneath the blow :
Yet so exceeding was the villeins powre,

[1] **losse**, destruction. [2] **mayne**, strength.

That with the winde it did him overthrow,
And all his sences stound that still he lay full low.

XIII

As when that divelish yron Engin, wrought
In deepest Hell, and framd by Furies skill,
With windy Nitre and quick Sulphur fraught,
And ramd with bollet rownd, ordaind to kill,
Conceiveth fyre, the heavens it doth fill
With thundring noyse, and all the ayre doth choke,
That none can breath, nor see, nor heare at will,
Through smouldry cloud of duskish stincking smoke;
That th' only breath him daunts, who hath escapt the stroke.

XIV

So daunted when the Geaunt saw the knight,
His heavie hand he heaved up on hye,
And him to dust thought to have battred quight,
Untill Duessa loud to him gan crye,
'O great Orgoglio! greatest under skye,
O! hold thy mortall[1] hand for Ladies sake;
Hold for my sake, and doe him not to dye,
But vanquisht thine eternall bondslave make,
And me, thy worthy meed, unto thy Leman take.'

XV

He hearkned, and did stay from further harmes,
To gayne so goodly guerdon as she spake:
So willingly she came into his armes,
Who her as willingly to grace did take,
And was possessed of his newfound make.
Then up he tooke the slombred sencelesse corse,

[1] mortall, deadly.

And, ere he could out of his swowne awake,
Him to his castle brought with hastie forse,
And in a Dongeon deepe him threw without remorse.

XVI

From that day forth Duessa was his deare,
And highly honourd in his haughtie eye:
He gave her gold and purple pall to weare,
And triple crowne set on her head full hye,
And her endowd with royall majestye.
Then, for to make her dreaded more of men,
And peoples hartes with awfull terror tye,
A monstrous beast ybredd in filthy fen
He chose, which he had kept long time in darksom den.

XVII

Such one it was, as that renowmed Snake
Which great Alcides[1] in Stremona slew,
Long fostred in the filth of Lerna lake:
Whose many heades, out budding ever new,
Did breed him endlesse labor to subdew.
But this same Monster much more ugly was,
For seven great heads out of his body grew,
An yron brest, and back of scaly bras,
And all embrewd in blood his eyes did shine as glas.

XVIII

His tayle was stretched out in wondrous length,
That to the hous of hevenly gods it raught:
And with extorted powre, and borrow'd strength,
The everburning lamps from thence it braught,
And prowdly threw to ground, as things of naught;

[1] Alcides, Hercules.

And underneath his filthy feet did tread
The sacred thinges, and holy heastes [1] foretaught.
Upon this dreadfull Beast with sevenfold head
He sett the false Duessa, for more aw and dread.

XIX

The wofull Dwarfe, which saw his maisters fall
Whiles he had keeping of his grasing steed,
And valiant knight become a caytive thrall,
When all was past, tooke up his forlorne weed;
His mightie Armour, missing most at need;
His silver shield, now idle, maisterlesse;
His poynant speare that many made to bleed,
The rueful moniments of heavinesse;
And with them all departes to tell his great distresse.

XX

He had not travaild long, when on the way
He wofull Lady, wofull Una, met,
Fast flying from that Paynims greedy pray,[2]
Whilest Satyrane him from pursuit did let: [3]
Who when her eyes she on the Dwarf had set,
And saw the signes that deadly tydinges spake,
She fell to ground for sorrowfull regret,
And lively breath her sad brest did forsake;
Yet might her pitteous hart be seene to pant and quake.

XXI

The messenger of so unhappie newes
Would faine have dyde: dead was his hart within,
Yet outwardly some little comfort shewes.

[1] heastes, behests, commands. [2] pray, pursuit.
[3] let, hinder.

At last, recovering hart, he does begin
To rubb her temples, and to chaufe her chin,
And everie tender part does tosse and turne:
So hardly he the flitted life does win
Unto her native prison to retourne;
Then gins her grieved ghost thus to lament and
mourne:

XXII

'Ye dreary instruments of dolefull sight,
That doe this deadly spectacle behold,
Why doe ye lenger feed on loathed light,
Or liking find to gaze on earthly mould,
Sith cruell fates the carefull threds unfould,
The which my life and love together tyde?
Now let the stony dart of sencelesse cold
Perce to my hart, and pas through everie side,
And let eternall night so sad sight fro me hyde.

XXIII

'O lightsome day! the lampe of highest Jove,
First made by him mens wandring wayes to guyde,
When darknesse he in deepest dongeon drove,
Henceforth thy hated face for ever hyde,
And shut up heavens windowes shyning wyde;
For earthly sight can nought but sorrow breed,
And late repentance which shall long abyde:
Mine eyes no more on vanitie shall feed,
But seeled up with death shall have their deadly
meed.'

XXIV

Then downe againe she fell unto the ground,
But he her quickly reared up againe:
Thrise did she sinke adowne in deadly swownd,

And thrise he her reviv'd with busie paine.
At last when life recover'd had the raine,
And over-wrestled his strong enimy,
With foltring tong, and trembling everie vaine,
'Tell on,' (quoth she) 'the wofull Tragedy,
The which these reliques sad present unto mine eye.

XXV

'Tempestuous fortune hath spent all her spight,
And thrilling sorrow throwne his utmost dart:
Thy sad tong cannot tell more heavy plight
Then that I feele, and harbour in mine hart:
Who hath endur'd the whole can beare ech part.
If death it be, it is not the first wound
That launched hath my brest with bleeding smart.
Begin, and end the bitter balefull stound;[1]
If lesse then that I feare, more favour I have found.'

XXVI

Then gan the Dwarfe the whole discourse declare;
The subtile traines of Archimago old;
The wanton loves of false Fidessa fayre,
Bought with the blood of vanquisht Paynim bold;
The wretched payre transformd to treën mould;
The house of Pryde, and perilles round about;
The combat which he with Sansjoy did hould;
The lucklesse conflict with the Gyaunt stout,
Wherein captiv'd, of life or death he stood in doubt.

XXVII

She heard with patience all unto the end,
And strove to maister sorrowfull assay,[2]

[1] **stound**, moment, time. [2] **assay**, assault.

Which greater grew the more she did contend,
And almost rent her tender hart in tway,
And love fresh coles unto her fire did lay;
For greater love, the greater is the losse.
Was never Lady loved dearer day
Then she did love the knight of the Redcrosse,
For whose deare sake so many troubles her did tosse.

XXVIII

At last when fervent sorrow slaked was,
She up arose, resolving him to find
Alive or dead; and forward forth doth pas,
All as the Dwarfe the way to her assynd;
And evermore, in constant carefull mind,
She fedd her wound with fresh renewed bale.
Long tost with stormes, and bet with bitter wind,
High over hills, and lowe adowne the dale,
She wandred many a wood, and measurd many a vale.

XXIX

At last she chaunced by good hap to meet
A goodly knight, faire marching by the way,
Together with his Squyre, arayed meet:
His glitterand armour shined far away,
Like glauncing light of Phœbus brightest ray;
From top to toe no place appeared bare,
That deadly dint of steele endanger may.
Athwart his brest a bauldrick[2] brave he ware,
That shind, like twinkling stars, with stones most pretious rare.

[1] **tway**, twain. [2] **bauldrick**, belt.

XXX

And in the midst thereof one pretious stone
Of wondrous worth, and eke of wondrous mights,
Shapt like a Ladies head, exceeding shone,
Like Hesperus [1] emongst the lesser lights,
And strove for to amaze the weaker sights:
Thereby his mortall blade full comely hong
In yvory sheath, ycarv'd with curious slights,[2]
Whose hilts were burnisht gold, and handle strong
Of mother perle; and buckled with a golden tong.

XXXI

His haughtie Helmet, horrid [3] all with gold,
Both glorious brightnesse and great terrour bredd:
For all the crest a Dragon did enfold
With greedie pawes, and over all did spredd
His golden winges: his dreadfull hideous hedd,
Close couched on the bever,[4] seemd to throw
From flaming mouth bright sparckles fiery redd,
That suddeine horrour to faint hartes did show;
And scaly tayle was stretcht adowne his back full low.

XXXII

Upon the top of all his loftie crest,
A bounch of heares discolourd diversly,
With sprincled pearle and gold full richly drest,
Did shake, and seemd to daunce for jollity,
Like to an almond tree ymounted hye

[1] **Hesperus**, morning star and evening star.
[2] **slights**, devices. [3] **horrid, rough.**
[4] **bever**, the movable front part of the helmet.

On top of greene Selinis[1] all alone,
With blossoms brave bedecked daintily;
Whose tender locks do tremble every one
At everie little breath that under heaven is blowne.

XXXIII

His warlike shield all closely cover'd was,
Ne might of mortall eye be ever seene;
Not made of steele, nor of enduring bras,
Such earthly mettals soon consumed beene,
But all of Diamond perfect pure and cleene
It framed was, one massy entire mould,
Hewen out of Adamant[2] rocke with engines keene,
That point of speare it never percen could,
Ne dint of direfull sword divide the substance would.

XXXIV

The same to wight he never wont disclose,
But whenas monsters huge he would dismay,
Or daunt unequall armies of his foes,
Or when the flying heavens he would affray;
For so exceeding shone his glistring ray,
That Phœbus golden face it did attaint,
As when a cloud his beames doth over-lay;
And silver Cynthia wexed pale and faynt,
As when her face is staynd with magicke arts constraint.

XXXV

No magicke arts hereof had any might,
Nor bloody wordes of bold Enchaunters call;

[1] **Selinis**, Selinus, in Sicily.
[2] **Adamant**, diamond, or any extremely hard substance.

But all that was not such as seemd in sight
Before that shield did fade, and suddeine fall:
And when him list[1] the raskall routes appall,
Men into stones therewith he could transmew,
And stones to dust, and dust to nought at all;
And, when him list the prouder lookes subdew,
He would them gazing blind, or turne to other hew.

XXXVI

Ne let it seeme that credence this exceedes;
For he that made the same was knowne right well
To have done much more admirable deedes.
It Merlin[2] was, which whylome did excell
All living wightes in might of magicke spell:
Both shield and sword, and armour all he wrought
For this young Prince, when first to armes he fell;
But, when he dyde, the Faery Queene it brought
To Faerie lond, where yet it may be seene, if sought:

XXXVII

A gentle youth, his dearely loved Squire,
His speare of heben wood behind him bare,
Whose harmeful head, thrise heated in the fire,
Had riven many a brest with pikehead[3] square:
A goodly person, and could menage faire
His stubborne steed with curbed canon[4] bitt,
Who under him did trample as the aire,
And chauft that any on his backe should sitt:
The yron rowels into frothy fome he bitt.

[1] **list**, pleased.
[2] **Merlin**, a famous enchanter in the story of King Arthur.
[3] **pikehead**, a flat, pointed head.
[4] **canon**, smooth and round.

XXXVIII

Whenas this knight nigh to the Lady drew,
With lovely court he gan her entertaine;
But, when he heard her answers loth, he knew
Some secret sorrow did her heart distraine;[1]
Which to allay, and calme her storming paine,
Faire feeling words he wisely gan display,
And for her humor fitting purpose faine,
To tempt the cause it selfe for to bewray,
Wherewith enmovd, these bleeding words she gan to say.

XXXIX

'What worlds delight, or joy of living speach,
Can hart, so plungd in sea of sorrowes deep,
And heaped with so huge misfortunes, reach?
The carefull cold beginneth for to creep,
And in my heart his yron arrow steep,
Soone as I thinke upon my bitter bale.
Such helplesse harmes yts better hidden keep,
Then rip up griefe where it may not availe:
My last left comfort is my woes to weepe and waile.'

XL

'Ah Lady deare,' quoth then the gentle knight,
'Well may I ween your griefe is wondrous great;
For wondrous great griefe groneth in my spright,
Whiles thus I heare you of your sorrowes treat.
But, woefull Lady, let me you intrete,
For to unfold the anguish of your hart:
Mishaps are maistred by advice discrete,

[1] distraine, rend.

And counsell mitigates the greatest smart:
Found never help who never would his hurts impart.'

XLI

'O, but,' (quoth she) 'great griefe will not be tould,
And can more easily be thought then said.'
'Right so,' (quoth he) 'but he that never would
Could never: will to might gives greatest aid.'
'But griefe,' (quoth she) 'does greater grow displaid,
If then it find not helpe, and breeds despaire.'
'Despaire breeds not,' (quoth he) 'where faith is staid.'
'No faith so fast,' (quoth she) 'but flesh does paire.'
'Flesh may empaire,' (quoth he) 'but reason can repaire.'

XLII

His goodly reason, and well-guided speach,
So deepe did settle in her gracious thought,
That her perswaded to disclose the breach
Which love and fortune in her heart had wrought;
And said; 'Faire Sir, I hope good hap hath brought
You to inquere the secrets of my griefe,
Or that your wisedome will direct my thought,
Or that your prowesse can me yield reliefe:
Then, heare the story sad, which I shall tell you briefe.

XLIII

'The forlorne Maiden, whom your eies have seene
The laughing stocke of fortunes mockeries,
Am th' onely daughter of a King and Queene,

Whose parents deare, whiles equal destinies
Did ronne about, and their felicities
The favourable heavens did not envy,
Did spred their rule through all the territories,
Which Phison [1] and Euphrates floweth by,
And Gehons golden waves doe wash continually:

XLIV

'Till that their cruell cursed enemy,
An huge great Dragon, horrible in sight,
Bred in the loathly lakes of Tartary,[2]
With murdrous ravine, and devouring might,
Their kingdome spoild, and countrey wasted quight:
Themselves, for feare into his jawes to fall,
He forst to castle strong to take their flight;
Where, fast embard in mighty brasen wall,
He has them now fowr years besiegd to make them thrall.

XLV

'Full many knights, adventurous and stout,
Have enterpriz'd that Monster to subdew.
From every coast that heaven walks about
Have thither come the noble Martial crew
That famous harde atchievements still pursew;
Yet never any could that girlond win,
But all still shronke, and still he greater grew:
All they, for want of faith, or guilt of sin,
The pitteous pray of his fiers cruelty have bin.

[1] **Phison, Euphrates, Gehon.** Pison, Gihon, Euphrates, and Hiddekel were the four rivers of Paradise. Pison, not Gihon, is in the land of gold.

[2] **Tartary**, Tartarus = a portion of Hades.

XLVI

'At last, yled with far reported praise,
Which flying fame throughout the world had spred,
Of doughty knights, whom Faery land did raise,
That noble order hight of maidenhed,
Forthwith to court of Gloriane I sped,
Of Gloriane, great Queene of glory bright,
Whose kingdomes seat Cleopolis is red;[1]
There to obtaine some such redoubted knight,
That Parents deare from tyrants powre deliver might.

XLVII

'Yt was my chaunce (my chaunce was faire and good)
There for to find a fresh unproved knight;
Whose manly hands imbrewd in guilty blood
Had never beene, ne ever by his might
Had throwne to ground the unregarded right:
Yet of his prowesse proofe he since hath made
(I witnes am) in many a cruell fight;
The groning ghosts of many one dismaide
Have felt the bitter dint of his avenging blade.

XLVIII

'And ye, the forlorne reliques of his powre,
His biting sword, and his devouring speare,
Which have endured many a dreadfull stowre,
Can speake his prowesse that did earst you beare,
And well could rule; now he hath left you heare
To be the record of his ruefull losse,

[1] **Cleopolis is red,** is called Cleopolis, the city of glory = London.

And of my dolefull disaventurous deare.[1]
O! heavie record of the good Redcrosse,
Where have yee left your lord that could so well you tosse?

XLIX

'Well hoped I, and faire beginnings had,
That he my captive languor[2] should redeeme:
Till, all unweeting, an Enchaunter bad
His sence abusd, and made him to misdeeme
My loyalty, not such as it did seeme,
That rather death desire then such despight.
Be judge, ye heavens, that all things right esteeme,
How I him lov'd, and love with all my might.
So thought I eke of him, and think I thought aright.

L

'Thenceforth me desolate he quite forsooke,
To wander where wilde fortune would me lead,
And other bywaies he himselfe betooke,
Where never foote of living wight did tread,
That brought not backe the balefull body dead:
In which him chaunced false Duessa meete,
Mine onely[3] foe, mine onely deadly dread;
Who with her witchcraft, and misseeming sweete,
Inveigled him to follow her desires unmeete.

LI

'At last, by subtile sleights she him betraid
Unto his foe, a Gyaunt huge and tall;

[1] **deare**, injury.

[2] **captive languor**, a figurative way of saying "languishing captives."

[3] **onely**, chief.

Who him disarmed, dissolute, dismaid,
Unwares surprised, and with mighty mall[1]
The monster mercilesse him made to fall,
Whose fall did never foe before behold:
And now in darkesome dungeon, wretched thrall,
Remedilesse for aie he doth him hold.
This is my cause of griefe, more great then may be told.'

LII

Ere she had ended all she gan to faint:
But he her comforted, and faire bespake:
'Certes, Madame, ye have great cause of plaint;
That stoutest heart, I weene, could cause to quake:
But be of cheare, and comfort to you take;
For till I have acquitt your captive knight,
Assure your selfe I will you not forsake.'
His chearefull words reviv'd her chearelesse spright,
So forth they went, the Dwarfe them guiding ever right.

CANTO VIII

Faire virgin, to redeeme her deare,
Brings Arthure to the fight:
Who slayes the Gyaunt, wounds the beast,
And strips Duessa quight.

I

Ay me! how many perils doe enfold
The righteous man, to make him daily fall,
Were not that heavenly grace doth him uphold,
And stedfast truth acquite him out of all.
Her love is firme, her care continuall,

[1] **mall, club.**

So oft as he, through his own foolish pride
Or weaknes, is to sinfull bands made thrall:
Els should this Redcrosse knight in bands have dyde,
For whose deliverance she this Prince doth thither
guyd.

II

They sadly traveild thus, untill they came
Nigh to a castle builded strong and hye:
Then cryde the Dwarfe, 'Lo! yonder is the same,
In which my Lord, my liege, doth lucklesse ly
Thrall to that Gyaunts hatefull tyranny:
Therefore, deare Sir, your mightie powres assay.'
The noble knight alighted by and by
From loftie steed, and badd the Ladie stay,
To see what end of fight should him befall that day.

III

So with his Squire, th' admirer of his might,
He marched forth towardes that castle wall,
Whose gates he fownd fast shutt, ne living wight
To warde the same, nor answere commers call.
Then tooke that Squire an horne of bugle[1] small,
Which hong adowne his side in twisted gold
And tasselles gay. Wyde wonders over all
Of that same hornes great virtues weren told,
Which had approved bene in uses manifold.

IV

Was never wight that heard that shrilling sownd,
But trembling feare did feel in every vaine:
Three miles it might be easy heard arownd,
And Ecchoes three aunswer'd it selfe againe:

[1] bugle, wild ox.

No false enchauntment, nor deceiptfull traine,
Might once abide the terror of that blast,
But presently was void and wholly vaine:
No gate so strong, no locke so firme and fast,
But with that percing noise flew open quite, or brast.

V

The same before the Geaunts gate he blew,
That all the castle quaked from the grownd,
And every dore of freewill open flew.
The Gyaunt selfe, dismaied with that sownd,
Where he with his Duessa dalliaunce fownd,
In hast came rushing forth from inner bowre,
With staring countenance sterne, as one astownd,
And staggering steps, to weet what suddein stowre
Had wrought that horror strange, and dar'd his dreaded powre.

VI

And after him the proud Duessa came,
High mounted on her many headed beast,
And every head with fyrie tongue did flame,
And every head was crowned on his creast,
And bloody mouthed with late cruell feast.
That when the knight beheld, his mightie shild
Upon his manly arme he soone addrest,
And at him fiersly flew, with corage fild,
And eger greedinesse through every member thrild.

VII

Therewith the Gyant buckled him to fight,
Inflamd with scornefull wrath and high disdaine,
And lifting up his dreadfull club on hight,

All armd with ragged snubbes[1] and knottie graine,
Him thought at first encounter to have slaine.
But wise and wary was that noble Pere;
And, lightly leaping from so monstrous maine,
Did fayre avoide the violence him nere:
It booted nought to thinke such thunderbolts to beare.

VIII

Ne shame he thought to shonne so hideous might:
The ydle stroke, enforcing furious way,
Missing the marke of his misaymed sight,
Did fall to ground, and with his heavy sway[2]
So deepely dinted in the driven clay,
That three yardes deepe a furrow up did throw.
The sad earth, wounded with so sore assay,
Did grone full grievous underneath the blow,
And trembling with strange feare did like an erthquake show.

IX

As when almightie Jove, in wrathfull mood,
To wreake the guilt of mortall sins is bent,
Hurles forth his thundring dart with deadly food
Enrold in flames, and smouldring dreriment,
Through riven cloudes and molten firmament;
The fiers threeforked engin, making way,
Both loftie towres and highest trees hath rent,
And all that might his angry passage stay;
And, shooting in the earth, castes up a mount of clay.

X

His boystrous[3] club, so buried in the grownd,
He could not rearen up againe so light,

[1] **snubbes**, knobs. [2] **sway**, swing. [3] **boystrous**, rough

But that the Knight him at advantage fownd;
And, whiles he strove his combred clubbe to quight
Out of the earth, with blade all burning bright
He smott off his left arme, which like a block
Did fall to ground, depriv'd of native might:
Large streames of blood out of the truncked stock
Forth gushed, like fresh water streame from riven rocke.

XI

Dismayed with so desperate deadly wound,
And eke impatient of unwonted payne,
He loudly brayd with beastly yelling sownd,
That all the fieldes rebellowed againe.
As great a noyse, as when in Cymbrian [1] plaine
An heard of Bulles, whom kindly rage doth sting,
Doe for the milky mothers want complaine,
And fill the fieldes with troublous bellowing:
The neighbor woods arownd with hollow murmur ring.

XII

That when his deare Duessa heard, and saw
The evil stownd that daungerd her estate,
Unto his aide she hastily did draw
Her dreadfull beast; who, swolne with blood of late,
Came ramping forth with proud presumpteous gate,
And threatned all his heades like flaming brandes.
But him the Squire made quickly to retrate,
Encountring fiers with single sword in hand;
And twixt him and his Lord did like a bulwarke stand.

[1] **Cymbrian.** "This plain may be the 'Cimbric Chersonese,' now Jutland, famous for its cattle; or, more probably, the steppes of the Cimmerians in South Russia and the Crimea." — Kitchin.

XIII

The proud Duessa, full of wrathfull spight,
And fiers disdaine to be affronted so,
Enforst her purple beast with all her might,
That stop out of the way to overthroe,
Scorning the let of so unequall foe:
But nathemore would that corageous swayne
To her yeeld passage gainst his Lord to goe,
But with outrageous strokes did him restraine,
And with his body bard the way atwixt them twaine.

XIV

Then tooke the angrie witch her golden cup,
Which still she bore, replete with magick artes;
Death and despeyre did many thereof sup,
And secret poyson through their inner partes,
Th' eternall bale of heavie wounded harts;
Which, after charmes and some enchauntments said,
She lightly sprinkled on his weaker partes:
Therewith his sturdie corage soon was quayd,[1]
And all his sences were with suddein dread dismayd.

XV

So downe he fell before the cruell beast,
Who on his neck his bloody clawes did seize,
That life nigh crusht out of his panting brest:
No powre he had to stirre, nor will to rize.
That when the carefull knight gan well avise,
He lightly left the foe with whom he fought,
And to the beast gan turne his enterprise;

[1] quayd, quelled.

For wondrous anguish in his hart it wrought,
To see his loved Squyre into such thraldom brought:

XVI

And, high advauncing his blood-thirstie blade,
Stroke one of those deformed heades so sore,
That of his puissaunce proud ensample made:
His monstrous scalpe downe to his teeth it tore,
And that misformed shape misshaped more.
A sea of blood gusht from the gaping wownd,
That her gay garments staynd with filthy gore,
And overflowed all the field arownd,
That over shoes in blood he waded on the grownd.

XVII

Thereat he rored for exceeding paine,
That to have heard great horror would have bred;
And scourging th' emptie ayre with his long trayne,
Through great impatience of his grieved hed,
His gorgeous ryder from her loftie sted
Would have cast downe, and trodd in durty myre,
Had not the Gyaunt soone her succoured;
Who, all enrag'd with smart and frantick yre,
Came hurtling in full fiers, and forst the knight retyre.

XVIII

The force, which wont in two to be disperst,
In one alone left hand he now unites,
Which is through rage more strong then both were erst;
With which his hideous club aloft he dites,[1]
And at his foe with furious rigor smites,
That strongest Oake might seeme to overthrow.

[1] dites, raises.

The stroke upon his shield so heavie lites,
That to the ground it doubleth him full low:
What mortall wight could ever beare so monstrous blow?

XIX

And in his fall his shield, that covered was,
Did loose his vele by chaunce, and open flew;
The light whereof, that hevens light did pas,
Such blazing brightnesse through the ayer threw,
That eye mote not the same endure to vew.
Which when the Gyaunt spyde with staring eye,
He downe let fall his arme, and soft withdrew
His weapon huge, that heaved was on hye
For to have slain the man, that on the ground did lye.

XX

And eke the fruitfull-headed beast, amazd
At flashing beames of that sunshiny shield,
Became stark blind, and all his sences dazd,
That downe he tumbled on the durtie field,
And seemd himselfe as conquered to yield.
Whom when his maistresse proud perceiv'd to fall,
Whiles yet his feeble feet for faintnesse reeld,
Unto the Gyaunt lowdly she gan call;
'O! helpe, Orgoglio; helpe! or els we perish all.'

XXI

At her so pitteous cry was much amoov'd
Her champion stout; and for to ayde his frend,
Againe his wonted angry weapon proov'd,
But all in vaine, for he has redd his end
In that bright shield, and all their forces spend
Them selves in vaine: for, since that glauncing sight,

He hath no powre to hurt, nor to defend.
As where th' Almighties lightning brond does light,
It dimmes the dazed eyen, and daunts the sences quight.

XXII

Whom when the Prince, to batteill new addrest
And threatning high his dreadfull stroke, did see,
His sparkling blade about his head he blest,
And smote off quite his right leg by the knee,
That downe he tombled; as an aged tree,
High growing on the top of rocky clift,
Whose hartstrings with keene steele nigh hewen be;
The mightie trunck, halfe rent with ragged rift,
Doth roll adowne the rocks, and fall with fearefull drift.[1]

XXIII

Or as a Castle, reared high and round,
By subtile engins and malitious slight
Is undermined from the lowest ground,
And her foundation forst, and feebled quight,
At last downe falles; and with her heaped hight
Her hastie ruine does more heavie make,
And yields it selfe unto the victours might.
Such was this Gyaunts fall, that seemd to shake
The stedfast globe of earth, as it for feare did quake.

XXIV

The knight, then lightly leaping to the pray,
With mortall steele him smot againe so sore,
That headlesse his unweldy bodie lay,
All wallowd in his owne fowle bloody gore,
Which flowed from his wounds in wondrous store.

[1] drift, onward rush.

But, soone as breath out of his brest did pas,
That huge great body, which the Gyaunt bore,
Was vanisht quite ; and of that monstrous mas
Was nothing left, but like an emptie blader was.

XXV

Whose grievous fall when false Duessa spyde,
Her golden cup she cast unto the ground,
And crowned mitre rudely threw asyde:
Such percing griefe her stubborne hart did wound,
That she could not endure that dolefull stound
But leaving all behind her fled away:
The light-foot Squyre her quickly turnd around,
And, by hard meanes enforcing her to stay,
So brought unto his Lord as his deserved pray.

XXVI

The roiall Virgin which beheld from farre,
In pensive plight and sad perplexitie,
The whole atchievement of this doubtfull warre,
Came running fast to greet his victorie,
With sober gladnesse and myld modestie;
And with sweet joyous cheare him thus bespake:
'Fayre braunch of noblesse, flowre of chevalrie,
That with your worth the world amazed make,
How shall I quite the paynes ye suffer for my sake?

XXVII

'And you, fresh budd of vertue springing fast,
Whom these sad eyes saw nigh unto deaths dore,
What hath poore Virgin for such perill past
Wherewith you to reward? Accept therefore
My simple selfe, and service evermore:

And he that high does sit, and all things see
With equall eye, their merites to restore,
Behold what ye this day have done for mee,
And what I cannot quite requite with usuree.

XXVIII

'But sith the heavens, and your faire handeling,
Have made you master of the field this day,
Your fortune maister eke with governing,
And, well begonne, end all so well, I pray!
Ne let that wicked woman scape away;
For she it is, that did my Lord bethrall,
My dearest Lord, and deepe in dongeon lay,
Where he his better dayes hath wasted all:
O heare, how piteous he to you for ayd does call!'

XXIX

Forthwith he gave in charge unto his Squyre,
That scarlot whore to keepen carefully;
Whyles he himselfe with greedie great desyre
Into the Castle entred forcibly,
Where living creature none he did espye,
Then gan he lowdly through the house to call,
But no man car'd to answere to his crye:
There raignd a solemne silence over all;
Nor voice was heard, nor wight was seene in bowre or hall.

XXX

At last, with creeping crooked pace forth came
An old old man, with beard as white as snow,
That on a staffe his feeble steps did frame,
And guyde his wearie gate both too and fro,
For his eye sight him fayled long ygo;

And on his arme a bounch of keyes he bore,
The which unused rust did overgrow:
Those were the keyes of every inner dore;
But he could not them use, but kept them still in store.

XXXI

But very uncouth sight was to behold,
How he did fashion his untoward pace;
For as he forward moovd his footing old,
So backward still was turnd his wrincled face:
Unlike to men, who ever, as they trace,
Both feet and face one way are wont to lead.
This was the auncient keeper of that place,
And foster father of the Gyaunt dead;
His name Ignaro did his nature right aread.

XXXII

His reverend heares and holy gravitee
The knight much honord, as beseemed well;
And gently askt, where all the people bee,
Which in that stately building wont to dwell:
Who answerd him full soft, *he could not tell.*
Again he askt, where that same knight was layd,
Whom great Orgoglio with his puissaunce fell
Had made his caytive thrall: againe he sayde,
He could not tell; ne ever other answere made.

XXXIII

Then asked he, which way he in might pas?
He could not tell, againe he answered.
Thereat the courteous knight displeased was,
And said; 'Old syre, it seemes thou hast not red[1]

[1] red, perceived.

How ill it sits with that same silver hed,
In vaine to mocke, or mockt in vaine to bee:
But if thou be, as thou art pourtrahed
With natures pen, in ages grave degree,
Aread in graver wise what I demaund of thee.'

XXXIV

His answere likewise was, *he could not tell:*
Whose sencelesse speach, and doted ignorance,
Whenas the noble Prince had marked well,
He ghest his nature by his countenance,
And calmd his wrath with goodly temperance.
Then, to him stepping, from his arme did reach
Those keyes, and made himselfe free enterance.
Each dore he opened without any breach,
There was no barre to stop, nor foe him to empeach.

XXXV

There all within full rich arayd he found,
With royall arras, and resplendent gold,
And did with store of every thing abound,
That greatest Princes presence might behold.
But all the floore (too filthy to be told)
With blood of guiltlesse babes, and innocents trew,
Which there were slaine as sheepe out of the fold,
Defiled was, that dreadfull was to vew;
And sacred ashes over it was strowed new.

XXXVI

And there beside of marble stone was built
An Altare, carv'd with cunning ymagery,
On which trew Christians blood was often spilt,
And holy Martyres often doen to dye

With cruell malice and strong tyranny:
Whose blessed sprites, from underneath the stone,
To God for vengeance cryde continually;
And with great griefe were often heard to grone,
That hardest heart would bleede to hear their piteous mone.

XXXVII

Through every rowme he sought, and everie bowr,
But no where could he find that wofull thrall:
At last he came unto an yron doore,
That fast was lockt, but key found not at all
Emongst that bounch to open it withall;
But in the same a little grate was pight,
Through which he sent his voyce, and lowd did call
With all his powre, to weet if living wight
Were housed therewithin, whom he enlargen might.

XXXVIII

Therewith an hollow, dreary, murmuring voyce
These pitteous plaintes and dolours did resound:
'O! who is that, which bringes me happy choyce
Of death, that here lye dying every stound,
Yet live perforce in balefull darkenesse bound?
For now three Moones have changed thrice their hew,
And have been thrice hid underneath the ground,
Since I the heavens chearefull face did vew.
O! welcome thou, that doest of death bring tydings trew.'

XXXIX

Which when that Champion heard, with percing point
Of pitty deare his hart was thrilled sore;
And trembling horrour ran through every joynt,

For ruth of gentle knight so fowle forlore;
Which shaking off, he rent that yron dore
With furious force and indignation fell;
Where entred in, his foot could find no flore,
But all a deepe descent, as darke as hell,
That breathed ever forth a filthie banefull smell.

XL

But nether darkenesse fowle, nor filthy bands,
Nor noyous smell, his purpose could withhold,
(Entire affection hateth nicer hands)
But that with constant zele and corage bold,
After long paines and labors manifold,
He found the meanes that Prisoner up to reare;
Whose feeble thighes, unable to uphold
His pined corse, him scarse to light could beare;
A ruefull spectacle of death and ghastly drere.

XLI

His sad dull eies, deepe sunck in hollow pits,
Could not endure th' unwonted sunne to view;
His bare thin cheekes for want of better bits,
And empty sides deceived of their dew,
Could make a stony hart his hap to rew;
His rawbone armes, whose mighty brawned bowrs[1]
Were wont to rive[2] steele plates, and helmets hew,
Were clene consum'd; and all his vitall powres
Decayd, and al his flesh shronk up like withered flowres.

XLII

Whome when his Lady saw, to him she ran
With hasty joy: to see him made her glad,

[1] bowrs, muscles. [2] rive, rend.

And sad to view his visage pale and wan,
Who earst in flowres of freshest youth was clad.
Tho, when her well of teares she wasted had,
She said; 'Ah dearest Lord! what evill starre
On you hath frownd, and pourd his influence bad,
That of your selfe ye thus berobbed arre,
And this misseeming hew your manly looks doth marre?

XLIII

'But welcome now, my Lord in wele or woe,
Whose presence I have lackt too long a day:
And fie on Fortune, mine avowed foe,
Whose wrathful wreakes[1] them selves doe now alay;
And for these wronges shall treble penaunce pay
Of treble good: good growes of evils priefe.'[2]
The chearelesse man, whom sorrow did dismay,
Had no delight to treaten of his griefe;
His long endured famine needed more reliefe.

XLIV

'Faire Lady,' then said that victorious knight,
'The things, that grievous were to doe, or beare,
Them to renew, I wote, breeds no delight;
Best musicke breeds delight in loathing eare,
But th' only good that growes of passed feare
Is to be wise, and ware of like agein.
This daies ensample hath this lesson deare
Deepe written in my heart with yron pen,
That blisse may not abide in state of mortall men.

[1] **wreakes**, vengeances.
[2] **priefe**, proof.

XLV

'Henceforth, Sir knight, take to you wonted strength,
And maister these mishaps with patient might.
Loe! where your foe lies strecht in monstrous length;
And loe! that wicked woman in your sight,
The roote of all your care and wretched plight,
Now in your powre, to let her live, or die.'
'To doe her die,' (quoth Una) 'were despight,
And shame t' avenge so weake an enimy;
But spoile her of her scarlot robe, and let her fly.'

XLVI

So, as she bad, that witch they disaraid,
And robd of roiall robes, and purple pall,
And ornaments that richly were displaid;
Ne spared they to strip her naked all.
Then, when they had despoyld her tire and call,[1]
Such as she was their eies might her behold,
That her misshaped parts did them appall:
A loathly, wrinckled hag, ill favoured, old,
Whose secret filth good manners biddeth not be told.

. . . . . .

XLIX

Which when the knights beheld amazd they were,
And wondred at so fowle deformed wight.
'Such then,' (said Una,) 'as she seemeth here,
Such is the face of falshood: such the sight
Of fowle Duessa, when her borrowed light
Is laid away, and counterfesaunce[2] knowne.'

[1] tire and call, attire and head-dress.
[2] counterfesaunce, counterfeiting.

Thus when they had the witch disrobed quight,
And all her filthy feature open showne,
They let her goe at will, and wander waies unknowne.

L

Shee, flying fast from heavens hated face,
And from the world that her discovered wide,
Fled to the wastfull wildernesse apace,
From living eies her open shame to hide,
And lurkt in rocks and caves, long unespide.
But that faire crew of knights, and Una faire,
Did in that castle afterwards abide,
To rest them selves, and weary powres repaire;
Where store they fownd of al that dainty was and rare.

CANTO IX

His loves and lignage Arthure tells:
The knights knitt friendly bands:
Sir Trevisan flies from Despeyre,
Whom Redcros knight withstands.

I

O GOODLY golden chayne, wherewith yfere[1]
The vertues linked are in lovely wize;
And noble mindes of yore allyed were,
In brave poursuitt of chevalrous emprize,[2]
That none did others safety despize,
Nor aid envy to him in need that stands;
But friendly each did others praise devize,
How to advaunce with favourable hands,
As this good Prince redeemd the Redcrosse knight from bands.

[1] **yfere**, together. [2] **emprize**, enterprise.

II

Who when their powres, empayrd through labor long,
With dew repast they had recured well,
And that weake captive wight now wexed strong,
Them list no lenger there at leasure dwell,
But forward fare as their adventures fell:
But, ere they parted, Una faire besought
That straunger knight his name and nation tell;
Least so great good, as he for her had wrought,
Should die unknown, and buried be in thankles thought.

III

'Faire virgin,' (said the Prince,) 'yee me require
A thing without the compas of my witt;
For both the lignage, and the certein Sire,
From which I sprong, from mee are hidden yitt:
For all so soone as life did me admitt
Into this world, and shewed hevens light,
From mothers pap I taken was unfitt,
And streight deliver'd to a Fary knight,
To be upbrought in gentle thewes [1] and martiall might.

IV

'Unto Old Timon he me brought bylive; [2]
Old Timon, who in youthly yeares hath beene
In warlike feates th' expertest man alive,
And is the wisest now on earth I weene:
His dwelling is low in a valley greene,
Under the foot of Rauran mossy hore,

[1] thewes, manners. [2] bylive, quickly.

From whence the river Dee, as silver cleene,
His tombling billowes rolls with gentle rore;
There all my daies he traind mee up in vertuous lore.

V

'Thither the great magicien Merlin came,
As was his use, ofttimes to visitt mee;
For he had charge my discipline to frame,
And Tutors nouriture to oversee.
Him oft and oft I askt in privity,
Of what loines and what lignage I did spring;
Whose aunswere bad me still assured bee,
That I was sonne and heire unto a king,
As time in her just term the truth to light should bring.'

VI

'Well worthy impe,' said then the Lady gent,[1]
'And Pupill fitt for such a Tutors hand!
But what adventure, or what high intent,
Hath brought you hither into Faery land,
Aread, Prince Arthure, crowne of Martiall band?'
'Full hard it is,' (quoth he) 'to read aright
The course of heavenly cause, or understand
The secret meaning of th' eternall might,
That rules mens waies, and rules the thoughts of living wight.

VII

'For whether he, through fatal deepe foresight,
Me hither sent for cause to me unghest;
Or that fresh bleeding wound, which day and night
Whilome doth rancle in my riven brest,

[1] **gent**, gentle, kind.

With forced fury following his behest,
Me hither brought by wayes yet never found,
You to have helpt I hold my selfe yet blest.'
'Ah! courteous Knight,' (quoth she) 'what secret wound
Could ever find to grieve the gentlest hart on ground?'

VIII

'Dear Dame,' (quoth he) 'you sleeping sparkes awake,
Which, troubled once, into huge flames will grow;
Ne ever will their fervent fury slake,
Till living moysture into smoke do flow,
And wasted life doe lye in ashes low:
Yet sithens silence lesseneth not my fire,
But, told, it flames; and, hidden, it does glow,
I will revele what ye so much desire.
Ah. Love! lay down thy bow, the whiles I may respyre.

IX

'It was in freshest flowre of youthly yeares,
When corage first does creepe in manly chest,
Then first the cole of kindly heat appeares
To kindle love in every living brest:
But me had warnd old Timons wise behest,
Those creeping flames by reason to subdew,
Before their rage grew to so great unrest,
As miserable lovers use to rew,
Which still wex old in woe, whiles wo stil wexeth new.

X

'That ydle name of love, and lovers life,
As losse of time, and vertues enimy,

I ever scornd, and joyd to stirre up strife,
In middest of their mournfull Tragedy ;
Ay wont to laugh when them I heard to cry,
And blow the fire which them to ashes brent :
Their God himselfe, grievd at my libertie,
Shott many a dart at me with fiers intent ;
But I them warded all with wary government.

XI

'But all in vaine : no fort can be so strong,
Ne fleshly brest can armed be so sownd,
But will at last be wonne with battrie long,
Or unawares at disavantage fownd.
Nothing is sure that growes on earthly grownd ;
And who most trustes in arme of fleshly might,
And boastes in beauties chaine not to be bownd,
Doth soonest fall in disaventrous fight,
And yeeldes his caytive neck to victours most despight.

XII

'Ensample make of him your haplesse joy,
And of my selfe now mated, as ye see ;
Whose prouder vaunt that proud avenging boy
Did soone pluck downe, and curbd my libertee.
For on a day, prickt forth with jollitee
Of looser life and heat of hardiment,
Raunging the forest wide on courser free,
The fields, the floods, the heavens, with one consent,
Did seeme to laugh on me, and favour mine intent.

XIII

'Forwearied with my sportes, I did alight
From loftie steed, and downe to sleepe me layd,

The verdant gras my couch did goodly dight,
And pillow was my helmett fayre displayd;
Whiles every sence the humour sweet embayd,
And slombring soft my hart did steale away,
Me seemed, by my side a royall Mayd
Her daintie limbes full softly down did lay:
So fayre a creature yet saw never sunny day.

XIV

'Most goodly glee[1] and lovely blandishment
She to me made, and badd me love her deare;
For dearely sure her love was to me bent,
As, when just time expired, should appeare.
But whether dreames delude, or true it were,
Was never hart so ravisht with delight,
Ne living man like wordes did ever heare,
As she to me delivered all that night;
And at her parting said, She Queene of Faeries hight.

XV

'When I awoke, and found her place devoyd,
And nought but pressed gras where she had lyen,
I sorrowed all so much as earst I joyd,
And washed all her place with watry eyen.
From that day forth I lov'd that face divyne;
From that day forth I cast in carefull mynd,
To seek her out with labor and long tyne,[2]
And never vowd to rest till her I fynd:
Nyne monethes I seek in vain, yet ni'll that vow unbynd.'

[1] glee, pleasure.
[2] tyne, grief, pain.

XVI

Thus as he spake, his visage wexed pale,
And chaunge of hew great passion did bewray;
Yett still he strove to cloke his inward bale,
And hide the smoke that did his fire display,
Till gentle Una thus to him gan say:
'O happy Queene of Faeries! that hast fownd,
Mongst many, one that with his prowesse may
Defend thine honour, and thy foes confownd.
True loves are often sówn, but seldom grow on grownd.'

XVII

'Thine, O! then,' said the gentle Redcrosse knight,
'Next to that Ladies love, shalbe the place,
O fayrest virgin! full of heavenly light,
Whose wondrous faith, exceeding earthly race,
Was firmest fixt in myne extremest case.
And you, my Lord, the Patrone of my life,
Of that great Queene may well gaine worthie grace,
For onely worthie you through prowes priefe,[1]
Yf living man mote worthie be to be her liefe.'[2]

XVIII

So diversly discoursing of their loves,
The golden Sunne his glistring head gan shew,
And sad remembraunce now the Prince amoves
With fresh desire his voyage to pursew;
Als Una earnd her traveill to renew.
Then those two knights, fast friendship for to bynd,
And love establish each to other trew,

[1] priefe, tried.
[2] liefe, dear.

Gave goodly gifts, the signes of gratefull mynd,
And eke, as pledges firme, right hands together joynd.

XIX

Prince Arthur gave a boxe of Diamond sure,
Embowd with gold and gorgeous ornament,
Wherein were closd few drops of liquor pure,
Of wondrous worth, and vertue excellent,
That any wownd could heale incontinent.
Which to requite, the Redcrosse knight him gave
A booke, wherein his Saveours testament
Was writt with golden letters rich and brave:
A worke of wondrous grace, and hable soules to save.

XX

Thus beene they parted; Arthur on his way
To seeke his love, and th' other for to fight
With Unaes foe, that all her realme did pray.
But she, now weighing the decayed plight
And shrunken synewes of her chosen knight,
Would not a while her forward course pursew,
Ne bring him forth in face of dreadfull fight,
Till he recovered had his former hew;
For him to be yet weake and wearie well she knew.

XXI

So as they traveild, lo! they gan espy
An armed knight towards them gallop fast,
That seemed from some feared foe to fly,
Or other griesly thing that him aghast.
Still as he fledd his eye was backward cast,
As if his feare still followed him behynd:
Als flew his steed as he his bandes had brast,

And with his winged heeles did tread the wynd,
As he had beene a fole of Pegasus his kynd.[1]

XXII

Nigh as he drew, they might perceive his head
To bee unarmd, and curld uncombed heares
Upstaring stiffe, dismaid with uncouth dread:
Nor drop of blood in all his face appeares,
Nor life in limbe; and, to increase his feares,
In fowle reproch of knighthoodes fayre degree,
About his neck an hempen rope he weares,
That with his glistring armes does ill agree,
But he of rope or armes has now no memoree.

XXIII

The Redcrosse knight toward him crossed fast,
To weet what mister wight[2] was so dismayd.
There him he findes all sencelesse and aghast,
That of him selfe he seemd to be afrayd;
Whom hardly he from flying forward stayd,
Till he these wordes to him deliver might:
'Sir knight, aread who hath ye thus arayd,
And eke from whom make ye this hasty flight?
For never knight I saw in such misseeming plight.'

XXIV

He answerd nought at all; but adding new
Feare to his first amazment, staring wyde
With stony eyes and hartlesse hollow hew,
Astonisht stood, as one that had aspyde

[1] **Pegasus his kynd**, of the species of Pegasus, the winged horse of the Muses.

[2] **To weet what mister wight**, to learn what manner of man.

Infernall furies with their chaines untyde.
Him yett againe, and yett againe, bespake
The gentle knight; who nought to him replyde;
But, trembling every joynt, did inly quake,
And foltring tongue, at last, these words seemd forth to shake;

XXV

'For Gods deare love, Sir knight, doe me not stay;
For loe! he comes, he comes fast after mee.'
Eft[1] looking back would faine have runne away;
But he him forst to stay, and tellen free
The secrete cause of his perplexitie:
Yet nathemore by his bold hartie speach
Could his blood frosen hart emboldened bee,
But through his boldnes rather feare did reach;
Yett, forst, at last he made through silence suddein breach.

XXVI

'And am I now in safetie sure,' (quoth he)
'From him that would have forced me to dye?
And is the point of death now turnd fro mee,
That I may tell this haplesse history?'
'Fear nought,' (quoth he) 'no daunger now is nye.'
'Then shall I you recount a ruefull cace,'
(Said he) 'the which with this unlucky eye
I late beheld; and, had not greater grace
Me reft from it, had bene partaker of the place.

XXVII

'I lately chaunst (Would I had never chaunst!)
With a fayre knight to keepen companee,

[1] Eft, again.

Sir Terwin hight, that well himselfe advaunst
In all affayres, and was both bold and free,
But not so happy as mote happy bee:
He lov'd, as was his lot, a Lady gent,
That him againe lov'd in the least degree;
For she was proud, and of too high intent,
And joyd to see her lover languish and lament:

XXVIII

'From whom retourning sad and comfortlesse,
As on the way together we did fare,
We met that villen, (God from him me blesse!)
That cursed wight, from whom I scapt whyleare,[1]
A man of hell that calls himselfe Despayre:
Who first us greets, and after fayre areedes
Of tydinges straunge, and of adventures rare:
So creeping close, as Snake in hidden weedes,
Inquireth of our states, and of our knightly deedes.

XXIX

'Which when he knew, and felt our feeble harts
Embost[2] with bale, and bitter byting griefe,
Which love had launched with his deadly darts,
With wounding words, and termes of foule repriefe,
He pluckt from us all hope of dew reliefe,
That earst us held in love of lingring life;
Then hopelesse, hartlesse, gan the cunning thiefe
Perswade us dye, to stint[3] all further strife:
To me he lent this rope, to him a rusty knife.

[1] **whyleare**, not long ago.
[2] **Embost**, beset, surrounded.
[3] **stint**, stop.

XXX

'With which sad instrument of hasty death,
That wofull lover, loathing lenger light,
A wyde way made to let forth living breath:
But I, more fearefull or more lucky wight,
Dismayd with that deformed dismall sight,
Fledd fast away, halfe dead with dying feare;
Ne yet assur'd of life by you, Sir knight,
Whose like infirmity like chaunce may beare;
But God you never let his charmed speaches
heare!'

XXXI

'How may a man,' (said he) 'with idle speach
Be wonne to spoyle the Castle of his health?'
'I wote,' (quoth he) 'whom tryall late did teach,
That like would not for all this worldes wealth.
His subtile tong like dropping honny mealt'h
Into the heart, and searcheth every vaine;
That, ere one be aware, by secret stealth
His powre is reft, and weaknes doth remaine.
O! never, Sir, desire to try his guilefull traine.'

XXXII

'Certes,' (sayd he) 'hence[1] shall I never rest,
Till I that treachours art have heard and tryde:
And you, Sir knight, whose name mote I request,
Of grace do me unto his cabin guyde.'
'I, that hight Trevisan,' (quoth he) 'will ryde
Against my liking backe to doe you grace:
But nor for gold nor glee will I abyde

[1] hence, henceforth.

By you, when ye arrive in that same place ;
For lever [1] had I die then see his deadly face.'

XXXIII

Ere long they come where that same wicked wight
His dwelling has, low in an hollow cave,
For underneath a craggy cliff ypight,
Darke, dolefull, dreary, like a greedy grave,
That still for carrion carcases doth crave :
On top whereof ay dwelt the ghastly Owle,
Shrieking his balefull note, which ever drave
Far from that haunt all other chearefull fowle ;
And all about it wandring ghostes did wayle and howle.

XXXIV

And all about old stockes and stubs of trees,
Whereon nor fruit nor leafe was ever seene,
Did hang upon the ragged rocky knees ;
On which had many wretches hanged beene,
Whose carcases were scattred on the greene,
And throwne about the cliffs. Arrived there,
That bare-head knight, for dread and dolefull teene,[2]
Would faine have fled, ne durst approchen neare ;
But th' other forst him staye, and comforted in feare

XXXV

That darkesome cave they enter, where they find
That cursed man, low sitting on the ground,
Musing full sadly in his sullein mind :
His griesie lockes, long growen and unbound,
Disordred hong about his shoulders round,
And hid his face, through which his hollow eyne

[1] lever, rather. [2] teene, pain.

Lookt deadly dull, and stared as astound ;
His raw-bone cheekes, through penurie and pine,
Were shronke into his jawes, as he did never dyne.

XXXVI

His garment, nought but many ragged clouts,[1]
With thornes together pind and patched was,
The which his naked sides he wrapt abouts ;
And him beside there lay upon the gras
A dreary corse, whose life away did pas,
All wallowd in his own yet luke-warme blood,
That from his wound yet welled fresh, alas!
In which a rusty knife fast fixed stood,
And made an open passage for the gushing flood.

XXXVII

Which piteous spectacle, approving trew
The wofull tale that Trevisan had told,
Whenas the gentle Redcrosse knight did vew,
With firie zeale he burnt in courage bold
Him to avenge before his blood were cold,
And to the villein sayd ; 'Thou damned wight,
The authour of this fact we here behold,
What justice can but judge against thee right,
With thine owne blood to price his blood, here shed in sight?'

XXXVIII

'What frantick fit,' (quoth he) 'hath thus distraught
Thee, foolish man, so rash a doome[2] to give?
What justice ever other judgement taught,
But he should dye who merites not to live?
None els to death this man despayring drive

[1] clouts, pieces of cloth, patches. [2] doome, judgment.

But his owne guiltie mind, deserving death.
Is then unjust to each his dew to give?
Or let him dye, that loatheth living breath,
Or let him die at ease, that liveth here uneath?[1]

XXXIX

'Who travailes by the wearie wandring way,
To come unto his wished home in haste,
And meetes a flood that doth his passage stay,
Is not great grace to helpe him over past,
Or free his feet that in the myre sticke fast?
Most envious man, that grieves at neighbours good;
And fond, that joyest in the woe thou hast!
Why wilt not let him passe, that long hath stood
Upon the bancke, yet wilt thy selfe not pas the flood?

XL

'He there does now enjoy eternall rest
And happy ease, which thou doest want and crave,
And further from it daily wanderest:
What if some little payne the passage have,
That makes frayle flesh to feare the bitter wave,
Is not short payne well borne, that bringes long ease,
And layes the soule to sleepe in quiet grave?
Sleepe after toyle, port after stormie seas,
Ease after warre, death after life, does greatly please.'

XLI

The knight much wondred at his suddeine wit,
And sayd; 'The terme of life is limited,
Ne may a man prolong, nor shorten, it:
The souldier may not move from watchfull sted,

[1] **uneath**, scarcely.

Nor leave his stand untill his Captaine bed.'
'Who life did limit by almightie doome,'
(Quoth he) 'knowes best the termes established;
And he, that points the Centonell his roome,
Doth license him depart at sound of morning droome.'

XLII

'Is not his deed, what ever thing is donne
In heaven and earth? Did not he all create
To die againe? All ends that was begonne:
Their times in his eternall booke of fate
Are written sure, and have their certein date.
Who then can strive with strong necessitie,
That holds the world in his still chaunging state,
Or shunne the death ordaynd by destinie?
When houre of death is come, let none aske whence, nor why.

XLIII

'The lenger life, I wote, the greater sin;
The greater sin, the greater punishment:
All those great battels, which thou boasts to win
Through strife, and blood-shed, and avengement,
Now praysd, hereafter deare thou shalt repent;
For life must life, and blood must blood, repay.
Is not enough thy evill life forespent?
For he that once hath missed the right way,
The further he doth goe, the further he doth stray.

XLIV

'Then doe no further goe, no further stray,
But here ly downe, and to thy rest betake,
Th' ill to prevent, that life ensewen may;
For what hath life that may it loved make,

And gives not rather cause it to forsake?
Feare, sicknesse, age, losse, labour, sorrow, strife,
Payne, hunger, cold that makes the hart to quake,
And ever fickle fortune rageth rife;[1]
All which, and thousands mo, do make a loathsome life.

XLV

'Thou, wretched man, of death hast greatest need,
If in true ballaunce thou wilt weigh thy state;
For never knight, that dared warlike deed,
More luckless dissaventures did amate:[2]
Witnes the dungeon deepe, wherein of late
Thy life shutt up for death so oft did call;
And though good lucke prolonged hath thy date,
Yet death then would the like mishaps forestall,
Into the which hereafter thou maist happen fall.

XLVI

'Why then doest thou, O man of sin! desire
To draw thy dayes forth to their last degree?
Is not the measure of thy sinfull hire
High heaped up with huge iniquitee,
Against the day of wrath to burden thee?
Is not enough, that to this Lady mild
Thou falsed hast thy faith with perjuree,
And sold thy selfe to serve Duessa vild,
With whom in al abuse thou hast thy selfe defild?

XLVII

'Is not he just, that all this doth behold
From highest heven, and beares an equall eie?
Shall he thy sins up in his knowledge fold,

[1] **rife**, abundantly, unhindered. [2] **amate**, daunt.

And guilty be of thine impietie?
Is not his lawe, Let every sinner die;
Die shall all flesh? What then must needs be donne,
Is it not better to doe willinglie,
Then linger till the glas be all out ronne?
Death is the end of woes: die soone, O faeries sonne!'

XLVIII

The knight was much enmoved with his speach,
That as a swords poynt through his hart did perse,
And in his conscience made a secrete breach,
Well knowing trew all that he did reherse,
And to his fresh remembraunce did reverse,[1]
The ugly vew of his deformed crimes;
That all his manly powres it did disperse,
As he were charmed with inchaunted rimes;
That oftentimes he quakt, and fainted oftentimes.

XLIX

In which amazement when the Miscreaunt
Perceived him to waver, weake and fraile,
Whiles trembling horror did his conscience daunt,
And hellish anguish did his soule assaile;
To drive him to despaire, and quite to quaile,[2]
Hee shewd him, painted in a table plaine,
The damned ghosts that doe in torments waile,
And thousand feends that doe them endlesse paine
With fire and brimstone, which for ever shall remaine.

L

The sight whereof so throughly him dismaid,
That nought but death before his eies he saw,

[1] **reverse,** cause to return. [2] **quaile,** defeat.

And ever burning wrath before him laid,
By righteous sentence of th' Almighties law.
Then gan the villein him to overcraw,[1]
And brought unto him swords, ropes, poison, fire,
And all that might him to perdition draw;
And bad him choose what death he would desire;
For death was dew to him that had provokt Gods ire.

LI

But, whenas none of them he saw him take,
He to him raught a dagger sharpe and keene,
And gave it him in hand: his hand did quake
And tremble like a leafe of Aspin greene,
And troubled blood through his pale face was seene
To come and goe with tidings from the heart,
As it a ronning messenger had beene.
At last, resolv'd to work his finall smart,
He lifted up his hand, that backe againe did start.

LII

Which whenas Una saw, through every vaine
The crudled cold ran to her well of life,
As in a swowne: but, soone reliv'd againe,
Out of his hand she snatcht the cursed knife,
And threw it to the ground, enraged rife,
And to him said; 'Fie, fie, faint hearted Knight!
What meanest thou by this reprochfull strife?
Is this the battaile which thou vauntst to fight
With that fire-mouthed Dragon, horrible and bright?

LIII

'Come; come away, fraile, feeble, fleshly wight,
Ne let vaine words bewitch thy manly hart,

[1] overcraw, insult.

Ne divelish thoughts dismay thy constant spright:
In heavenly mercies hast thou not a part?
Why shouldst thou then despeire, that chosen art?
Where justice growes, there grows eke greater grace,
The which doth quench the brond of hellish smart,
And that accurst hand-writing doth deface.
Arise, sir Knight; arise, and leave this cursed place.'

LIV

So up he rose, and thence amounted streight.
Which when the carle [1] beheld, and saw his guest
Would safe depart, for all his subtile sleight,
He chose an halter from among the rest,
And with it hong him selfe, unbid,[2] unblest.
But death he could not worke himselfe thereby;
For thousand times he so him selfe had drest,[3]
Yet nathelesse it could not doe him die,
Till he should die his last, that is, eternally.

CANTO X

Her faithfull knight faire Una brings
To house of Holinesse;
Where he is taught repentaunce, and
The way to hevenly blesse.

I

What man is he, that boasts of fleshly might
And vaine assuraunce of mortality,
Which, all so soone as it doth come to fight
Against spirituall foes, yields by and by,
Or from the fielde most cowardly doth fly!

[1] **carle**, churl.
[2] **unbid**, without a prayer.
[3] **drest**, disposed.

Ne let the man ascribe it to his skill,
That thorough grace hath gained victory:
If any strength we have, it is to ill,
But all the good is Gods, both power and eke will.

II

By that which lately hapned Una saw
That this her knight was feeble, and too faint;
And all his sinewes woxen weake and raw,
Through long enprisonment, and hard constraint,
Which he endured in his late restraint,
That yet he was unfitt for bloody fight.
Therefore, to cherish him with diets daint,
She cast to bring him where he chearen might,
Till he recovered had his late decayed plight.

III

There was an auncient house nor far away,
Renowmd throughout the world for sacred lore
And pure unspotted life: so well, they say,
It governd was, and guided evermore,
Through wisedome of a matrone grave and hore;
Whose onely joy was to relieve the needes
Of wretched soules, and helpe the helpelesse pore:
All night she spent in bidding of her bedes,[1]
And all the day in doing good and godly deedes.

IV

Dame Cælia men did her call, as thought
From heaven to come, or thither to arise;

[1] bidding of her bedes, praying.

The mother of three daughters, well upbrought
In goodly thewes, and godly exercise:
The eldest two, most sober, chast, and wise,
Fidelia and Speranza, virgins were;
Though spousd, yet wanting wedlocks solemnize;
But faire Charissa to a lovely fere [1]
Was lincked, and by him had many pledges dere.

V

Arrived there, the dore they find fast lockt,
For it was warely watched night and day,
For feare of many foes; but, when they knockt,
The Porter opened unto them streight way.
He was an aged syre, all hory gray,
With lookes full lowly cast, and gate full slow,
Wont on a staffe his feeble steps to stay,
Hight Humiltá. They passe in, stouping low;
For streight and narrow was the way which he did show.

VI

Each goodly thing is hardest to begin;
But, entred in, a spatious court they see,
Both plaine and pleasaunt to be walked in;
Where them does meete a francklin [2] faire and free,
And entertaines with comely courteous glee;
His name was Zele, that him right well became:
For in his speaches and behaveour hee
Did labour lively to expresse the same,
And gladly did them guide, till to the Hall they came.

[1] **fere**, companion, husband.
[2] **francklin**, a man of landed property.

VII

There fayrely them receives a gentle Squyre,[1]
Of myld demeanure and rare courtesee,
Right cleanly clad in comely sad attyre;
In word and deede that shewd great modestee,
And knew his good[2] to all of each degree,
Hight Reverence. He them with speaches meet
Does faire entreat; no courting nicetee,
But simple, trew, and eke unfained sweet,
As might become a Squyre so great persons to greet.

VIII

And afterwardes them to his Dame he leades,
That aged Dame, the Lady of the place,
Who all this while was busy at her beades;
Which doen, she up arose with seemely grace,
And toward them full matronely did pace.
Where, when that fairest Una she beheld,
Whom well she knew to spring from hevenly race,
Her heart with joy unwonted inly sweld,
As feeling wondrous comfort in her weaker eld:[3]

IX

And, her embracing, said; 'O happy earth,
Whereon thy innocent feet doe ever tread!
Most vertuous virgin, borne of hevenly berth,
That, to redeeme thy woefull parents head
From tyrans rage and ever-dying dread,
Hast wandred through the world now long a day,
Yett ceassest not thy weary soles to lead;

[1] **Squyre**, in chivalry, a young man in training for knighthood.
[2] **knew his good**, knew the courtesy due. [3] **eld**, old age.

What grace hath thee now hither brought this way?
Or doen thy feeble feet unweeting hither stray?

X

'Straunge thing it is an errant knight to see
Here in this place; or any other wight,
That hither turnes his steps. So few there bee,
That chose the narrow path, or seeke the right:
All keepe the broad high way, and take delight
With many rather for to goe astray,
And be partakers of their evill plight,
Then with a few to walke the rightest way.
O foolish men! why hast ye to your own decay?'

XI

'Thy selfe to see, and tyred limbes to rest,
O matrone sage,' (quoth she) 'I hither came;
And this good knight his way with me addrest,
Ledd with thy prayses, and broad-blazed fame,
That up to heven is blowne.' The auncient Dame
Him goodly greeted in her modest guyse,
And enterteynd them both, as best became,
With all the court'sies that she could devyse,
Ne wanted ought to shew her bounteous or wise.

XII

Thus as they gan of sondrie thinges devise,[1]
Loe! two most goodly virgins came in place,
Ylinked arme in arme in lovely wise:
With countenance demure, and modest grace,
They numbred even steps and equall pace:
Of which the eldest, that Fidelia hight,

[1] devise, converse

Like sunny beames threw from her Christall face
That could have dazd the rash beholders sight,
And round about her head did shine like heavens light,

XIII

She was araied all in lilly white,
And in her right hand bore a cup of gold,
With wine and water fild up to the hight,
In which a Serpent did himselfe enfold,
That horrour made to all that did behold;
But she no whitt did chaunge her constant mood:
And in her other hand she fast did hold
A booke, that was both signd and seald with blood;
Wherein darke things were writt, hard to be understood.

XIV

Her younger sister, that Speranza hight,
Was clad in blew, that her beseemed well;
Not all so chearefull seemed she of sight,
As was her sister; whether dread did dwell
Or anguish in her hart, is hard to tell.
Upon her arme a silver anchor lay,
Whereon she leaned ever, as befell;
And ever up to heven, as she did pray,
Her stedfast eyes were bent, ne swarved other way.

XV

They, seeing Una, towardes her gan wend,
Who them encounters with like courtesee;
Many kind speeches they betweene them spend,
And greatly joy each other for to see:
Then to the knight with shamefast modestie
They turne themselves, at Unaes meeke request,

And him salute with well beseeming glee;
Who faire them quites, as him beseemed best,
And goodly gan discourse of many a noble gest.[1]

XVI

Then Una thus; 'But she, your sister deare,
The deare Charissa, where is she become?
Or wants she health, or busie is elswhere?'
'Ah! no,' said they, 'but forth she may not come;
For she of late is lightned of her wombe,
And hath encreast the world with one sonne more,
That her to see should be but troublesome.'
'Indeed,' (quoth she) 'that should her trouble sore,
But thankt be God, and her encrease so evermore!'

XVII

Then said the aged Cælia, 'Deare dame,
And you, good Sir, I wote that of youre toyle
And labors long, through which ye hither came,
Ye both forwearied be: therefore, a whyle
I read you rest, and to your bowres recoyle.'[2]
Then called she a Groome,[3] that forth him ledd
Into a goodly lodge, and gan despoile
Of puissant armes, and laid in easie bedd
His name was meeke Obedience, rightfully aredd.[4]

XVIII

Now when their wearie limbes with kindly rest,
And bodies were refresht with dew repast,
Fayre Una gan Fidelia fayre request,
To have her knight into her schoolehous plaste,

[1] **gest**, deed.
[2] **recoyle**, retire.
[3] **Groome**, servant.
[4] **aredd**, appointed.

That of her heavenly learning he might taste,
And heare the wisedom of her wordes divine.
She graunted; and that knight so much agraste,
That she him taught celestiall discipline,
And opened his dull eyes, that light mote in them shine.

XIX

And that her sacred Booke, with blood ywritt,
That none could reade except she did them teach,
She unto him disclosed every whitt;
And heavenly documents thereout did preach,
That weaker witt of man could never reach;
Of God; of grace; of justice; of free-will;
That wonder was to heare her goodly speach:
For she was hable with her wordes to kill,
And rayse againe to life the hart that she did thrill.[1]

XX

And, when she list poure out her larger spright,
She would commaund the hasty Sunne to stay,
Or backward turne his course from hevens hight:
Sometimes great hostes of men she could dismay;
Dry-shod to passe she parts the flouds in tway;
And eke huge mountaines from their native seat
She would commaund themselves to beare away,
And throw in raging sea with roaring threat.
Almightie God her gave such powre and puissaunce great.

XXI

The faithfull knight now grew in little space
By hearing her, and by her sisters lore,

[1] thrill, pierce.

To such perfection of all hevenly grace,
That wretched world he gan for to abhore,
And mortall life gan loath as thing forlore,
Greevd with remembrance of his wicked wayes,
And prickt with anguish of his sinnes so sore,
That he desirde to end his wretched dayes:
So much the dart of sinfull guilt the soule dismayes.

XXII

But wise Speranza gave him comfort sweet,
And taught him how to take assured hold
Upon her silver anchor, as was meet;
Els had his sinnes, so great and manifold,
Made him forget all that Fidelia told.
In this distressed doubtfull agony,
When him his dearest Una did behold
Disdeining life, desiring leave to dye,
She found her selfe assayld with great perplexity;

XXIII

And came to Cælia to declare her smart;
Who, well acquainted with that commune plight,
Which sinfull horror workes in wounded hart,
Her wisely comforted all that she might,
With goodly counsell and advisement right;
And streightway sent with carefull diligence,
To fetch a Leach, the which had great insight
In that disease of grieved conscience,
And well could cure the same: His name was Patience.

XXIV

Who, comming to that sowle-diseased knight,
Could hardly him intreat to tell his grief:

Which knowne, and all that noyd his heavie spright
Well searcht, eftsoones he gan apply relief
Of salves and med'cines, which had passing prief;[1]
And thereto added wordes of wondrous might.
By which to ease he him recured brief,
And much aswag'd the passion[2] of his plight,
That he his paine endur'd, as seeming now more light.

XXV

But yet the cause and root of all his ill,
Inward corruption and infected sin,
Not purg'd nor heald, behind remained still,
And festring sore did ranckle yett within,
Close creeping twixt the marow and the skin:
Which to extirpe, he laid him privily
Downe in a darksome lowly place far in,
Whereas he meant his corrosives to apply,
And with streight diet tame his stubborne malady.

XXVI

In ashes and sackcloth he did array
His daintie corse, proud humors to abate;
And dieted with fasting every day,
The swelling of his woundes to mitigate;
And made him pray both earely and eke late:
And ever, as superfluous flesh did rott,
Amendment readie still at hand did wayt,
To pluck it out with pincers fyrie whott,
That soone in him was lefte no one corrupted jott.[3]

[1] **passing prief**, i. e. were of surpassing excellence.
[2] **passion**, suffering.
[3] **jott**, small piece.

XXVII

And bitter Penaunce, with an yron whip,
Was wont him once to disple [1] every day:
And sharp Remorse his hart did prick and nip,
That drops of blood thence like a well did play:
And sad Repentance used to embay
His blamefull body in salt water sore,
The filthy blottes of sin to wash away.
So in short space they did to health restore
The man that would not live, but erst lay at deathes dore.

XXVIII

In which his torment often was so great,
That like a Lyon he would cry and rore,
And rend his flesh, and his owne synewes eat.
His owne deare Una, hearing evermore
His ruefull shriekes and gronings, often tore
Her guiltlesse garments and her golden heare,
For pitty of his payne and anguish sore:
Yet all with patience wisely she did beare,
For well she wist his cryme could els be never cleare.[2]

XXIX

Whom, thus recover'd by wise Patience
And trew Repentaunce, they to Una brought;
Who, joyous of his cured conscience,
Him dearely kist, and fayrely eke besought
Himselfe to chearish, and consuming thought
To put away out of his carefull brest.
By this Charissa, late in child-bed brought,

[1] **disple**, discipline.
[2] **cleare**, clean.

Was woxen strong, and left her fruitfull nest:
To her fayre Una brought this unacquainted guest.

XXX

She was a woman in her freshest age,
Of wondrous beauty, and of bounty rare,
With goodly grace and comely personage,
That was on earth not easie to compare;
Full of great love, but Cupids wanton snare
As hell she hated; chaste in worke and will:
Her necke and brests were ever open bare,
That ay thereof her babes might sucke their fill;
The rest was all in yellow robes arayed still.

XXXI

A multitude of babes about her hong,
Playing their sportes, that joyd her to behold;
Whom still she fed whiles they were weake and young,
But thrust them forth still as they wexed old:
And on her head she wore a tyre of gold,
Adornd with gemmes and owches wondrous fayre,
Whose passing price uneath was to be told:
And by her syde there sate a gentle payre,
Of turtle doves, she sitting in an yvory chayre.

XXXII

The knight and Una entring fayre her greet,
And bid her joy of that her happy brood;
Who them requites with court'sies seeming meet,
And entertaynes with friendly chearefull mood.
Then Una her besought, to be so good
As in her vertuous rules to schoole her knight,
Now after all his torment well withstood

In that sad house of Penaunce, where his spright
Had past the paines of hell and long-enduring night.

XXXIII

She was right joyous of her just request;
And taking by the hand that Faeries sonne,
Gan him instruct in everie good behest,
Of love, and righteousnes, and well to donne;
And wrath and hatred warely to shonne,
That drew on men Gods hatred and his wrath,
And many soules in dolours had fordonne:
In which when him she well instructed hath,
From thence to heaven she teacheth him the ready path.

XXXIV

Wherein his weaker wandring steps to guyde,
An auncient matrone she to her does call,
Whose sober lookes her wisedome well descryde:
Her name was Mercy; well knowne over-all
To be both gratious and eke liberall:
To whom the carefull charge of him she gave,
To leade aright, that he should never fall
In all his waies through this wide worldes wave;
That Mercy in the end his righteous soule might save.

XXXV

The godly Matrone by the hand him beares
Forth from her presence, by a narrow way,
Scattred with bushy thornes and ragged breares,
Which still before him she remov'd away,
That nothing might his ready passage stay:
And ever, when his feet encombred were,
Or gan to shrinke, or from the right to stray,

She held him fast, and firmely did upbeare,
As carefull Nourse her child from falling oft does reare.

XXXVI

Eftsoones unto an holy Hospitall,
That was foreby the way, she did him bring;
In which seven Bead-men,[1] that had vowed all
Their life to service of high heavens King,
Did spend their daies in doing godly thing.
Their gates to all were open evermore,
That by the wearie way were traveiling;
And one sate wayting ever them before,
To call in commers-by that needy were and pore.

XXXVII

The first of them, that eldest was and best,
Of all the house had charge and governement,
As Guardian and Steward of the rest.
His office was to give entertainement
And lodging unto all that came and went;
Not unto such as could him feast againe,
And double quite for that he on them spent;
But such as want of harbour did constraine:
Those for Gods sake his dewty was to entertaine.

XXXVIII

The second was as Almner[2] of the place;
His office was the hungry for to feed,
And thristy give to drinke; a worke of grace,
He feard not once himselfe to be in need,
Ne car'd to hoord for those whom he did breede;

[1] **Bead-men**, beadsmen, employed to pray for other persons.
[2] **Almner**, almoner.

The grace of God he layd up still in store,
Which as a stocke he left unto his seede.
He had enough; what need him care for more?
And had he lesse, yet some he would give to the pore.

XXXIX

The third had of their wardrobe custody,
In which were not rich tyres,[1] nor garments gay,
The plumes of pride, and winges of vanity,
But clothes meet to keepe keene cold away,
And naked nature seemely to aray;
With which bare wretched wights he dayly clad,
The images of God in earthly clay;
And, if that no spare clothes to give he had,
His owne cote he would cut, and it distribute glad.

XL

The fourth appointed by his office was
Poore prisoners to relieve with gratious ayd,
And captives to redeeme with price of bras
From Turkes and Sarazins, which them had stayd:
And though they faulty were, yet well he wayd,
That God to us forgiveth every howre
Much more then that why they in bands were layd;
And he, that harrowd hell[2] with heavie stowre,
The faulty soules from thence brought to his heavenly bowre.

XLI

The fift had charge sick persons to attend,
And comfort those in point of death which lay;

[1] **tyres**, dresses.

[2] **harrowd hell**, a reference to the doctrine that after his death Christ descended into hell, and ransomed his saints.

For them most needeth comfort in the end,
When sin, and hell, and death, doe most dismay
The feeble soule departing hence away.
All is but lost, that living we bestow,
If not well ended at our dying day.
O man! have mind of that last bitter throw:[1]
For as the tree does fall, so lyes it ever low.

XLII

The sixt had charge of them now being dead,
In seemely sort their corses to engrave,
And deck with dainty flowres their brydall bed,
That to their heavenly spouse both sweet and brave
They might appeare, when he their soules shall save.
The wondrous workmanship of Gods owne mould,
Whose face he made all beastes to feare, and gave
All in his hand, even dead we honour should.
Ah, dearest God, me graunt, I dead be not defould!

XLIII

The seventh, now after death and buriall done,
Had charge the tender Orphans of the dead
And wydowes ayd, least they should be undone:
In face of judgement he their right would plead,
Ne ought the powre of mighty men did dread
In their defence; nor would for gold or fee
Be wonne their rightfull causes downe to tread;
And, when they stood in most necessitee,
He did supply their want, and gave them ever free.

XLIV

There when the Elfin knight arrived was,
The first and chiefest of the seven, whose care

[1] throw, throe.

Was guests to welcome, towardes him did pas;
Where seeing Mercie, that his steps upbare
And alwaies led, to her with reverence rare
He humbly louted [1] in meeke lowlinesse,
And seemely welcome for her did prepare:
For of their order she was Patronesse,
Albe Charissa were their chiefest founderesse.

XLV

There she awhile him stayes, himselfe to rest,
That to the rest more hable he might bee;
During which time, in every good behest,
And godly worke of Almes and charitee,
Shee him instructed with great industree.
Shortly therein so perfect he became,
That, from the first unto the last degree,
His mortall life he learned had to frame
In holy righteousnesse, without rebuke or blame.

XLVI

Thence forward by that painfull way they pas
Forth to an hill that was both steepe and hy,
On top whereof a sacred chappell was,
And eke a litle Hermitage thereby,
Wherein an aged holy man did lie,
That day and night said his devotion,
Ne other worldly busines did apply:
His name was hevenly Contemplation;
Of God and goodnes was his meditation.

XLVII

Great grace that old man to him given had;
For God he often saw from heavens hight:

[1] louted, bowed.

All were his earthly eien both blunt and bad,
And through great age had lost their kindly sight,
Yet wondrous quick and persaunt[1] was his spright,
As Eagles eie that can behold the Sunne.
That hill they scale with all their powre and might,
That his fraile thighes, nigh weary and fordonne,
Gan faile; but by her helpe the top at last he wonne.

XLVIII

There they doe finde that godly aged Sire,
With snowy lockes adowne his shoulders shed;
As hoary frost with spangles doth attire
The mossy braunches of an Oke halfe ded.
Each bone might through his body well be red
And every sinew seene, through his long fast;
For nought he car'd his carcas long unfed;
His mind was full of spiritual repast,
And pyn'd his flesh to keepe his body low and chast.

XLIX

Who, when these two approching he aspide,
At their first presence grew agrieved sore,
That forst him lay his hevenly thoughts aside;
And had he not that Dame respected more,
Whom highly he did reverence and adore,
He would not once have moved for the knight.
They him saluted, standing far afore,
Who, well them greeting, humbly did requight,
And asked to what end they clomb that tedious hight?

[1] **persaunt**, piercing.

L

'What end,' (quoth she) 'should cause us take such paine,
But that same end, which every living wight
Should make his marke high heaven to attaine?
Is not from hence the way, that leadeth right
To that most glorious house, that glistreth bright
With burning starres and everliving fire,
Whereof the keies are to thy hand behight[1]
By wise Fidelia? Shee doth thee require,
To shew it to this knight, according his desire.'

LI

'Thrise happy man,' said then the father grave,
'Whose staggering steps thy steady hand doth lead,
And shewes the way his sinfull soule to save!
Who better can the way to heaven aread
Then thou thyselfe, that was both borne and bred
In hevenly throne, where thousand Angels shine?
Thou doest the praiers of the righteous sead
Present before the majesty divine,
And his avenging wrath to clemency incline.

LII

'Yet, since thou bidst, thy pleasure shalbe donne.
Then come, thou man of earth, and see the way,
That never yet was seene of Faeries sonne;
That never leads the traveiler astray,
But after labors long and sad delay,

[1] behight, entrusted.

Brings them to joyous rest and endlesse blis.
But first thou must a season fast and pray,
Till from her bands the spright assoiled[1] is,
And have her strength recur'd from fraile infirmitis.'

LIII

That done, he leads him to the highest Mount,
Such one as that same mighty man of God,[2]
That blood-red billowes, like a walled front,
On either side disparted with his rod,
Till that his army dry-foot through them yod,[3]
Dwelt forty daies upon; where, writt in stone
With bloody letters by the hand of God,
The bitter doome of death and balefull mone
He did receive, whiles flashing fire about him shone:

LIV

Or like that sacred hill,[4] whose head full hie,
Adornd with fruitfull Olives all arownd,
Is, as it were for endlesse memory
Of that deare Lord who oft thereon was fownd,
For ever with a flowring girlond crownd:
Or like that pleasaunt Mount,[5] that is for ay
Through famous Poets verse each where renownd,
On which the thrise three learned Ladies[6] play
Their hevenly notes, and make full many a lovely lay.

[1] **assoiled**, absolved.

[2] **man of God**, Moses, who, upon Mount Sinai, received the two tables of the law.

[3] **yod**, went.

[4] **sacred hill**, Mount of Olives.

[5] **pleasaunt Mount**, Parnassus.

[6] **thrise three learned Ladies**, the Muses.

LV

From thence, far off he unto him did shew
A little path that was both steepe and long,
Which to a goodly Citty led his vew,
Whose wals and towres were builded high and strong
Of perle and precious stone, that earthly tong
Cannot describe, nor wit of man can tell;
Too high a ditty[1] for my simple song.
The Citty of the greate king hight it well,
Wherein eternall peace and happinesse doth dwell.

LVI

As he thereon stood gazing, he might see
The blessed Angels to and fro descend
From highest heven in gladsome companee,
And with great joy into that Citty wend,
As commonly as frend does with his frend.
Whereat he wondred much, and gan enquere,
What stately building durst so high extend
Her lofty towres unto the starry sphere,
And what unknowen nation there empeopled were?

LVII

'Faire Knight,' (quoth he) 'Hierusalem that is,
The new Hierusalem, that God has built
For those to dwell in that are chosen his,
His chosen people, purg'd from sinful guilt
With pretious blood, which cruelly was spilt
On cursed tree, of that unspotted lam,
That for the sinnes of al the world was kilt:

[1] ditty, subject.

Now are they Saints all in that Citty sam,[1]
More dear unto their God then younglings to their dam.'

LVIII

'Till now,' said then the knight, 'I weened well,
That great Cleopolis, where I have beene,
In which that fairest Faery Queene doth dwell,
The fairest citty was that might be seene;
And that bright towre, all built of christall clene,
Panthea,[2] seemd the brightest thing that was;
But now by proofe all otherwise I weene,
For this great Citty that does far surpas,
And this bright Angels towre quite dims that towre of glas.'

LIX

'Most trew,' then said the holy aged man;
'Yet is Cleopolis, for earthly frame,
The fairest peece[3] that eie beholden can;
And well beseemes all knights of noble name,
That covett in th' immortall booke of fame
To be eternized, that same to haunt,
And doen their service to that soveraigne Dame,
That glory does to them for guerdon graunt:
For she is hevenly borne, and heaven may justly vaunt.

LX

'And thou, faire ymp, sprong out from English race,
How ever now accompted Elfins sonne,
Well worthy doest thy service for her grace,
To aide a virgin desolate, foredonne;
But when thou famous victory hast wonne,

[1] **sam**, together. [2] **Panthea**, Westminster Abbey.
[3] **peece**, fabric, structure.

And high emongst all knights hast hong thy shield,
Thenceforth the suitt [1] of earthly conquest shonne,
And wash thy hands from guilt of bloody field:
For blood can nought but sin, and wars but sorrows yield.

LXI

'Then seek this path that I to thee presage,[2]
Which after all to heaven shall thee send;
Then peaceably thy painefull pilgrimage
To yonder same Hierusalem doe bend,
Where is for thee ordaind a blessed end:
For thou, emongst those Saints whom thou doest see,
Shalt be a Saint, and thine owne nations frend
And Patrone: thou *Saint George* shalt called bee,
Saint George of mery *England*, the signe of victoree.'

LXII

'Unworthy wretch,' (quoth he) 'of so great grace,
How dare I thinke such glory to attaine?'
'These, that have it attaynd, were in like cace,
As wretched men, and lived in like paine.'
'But deeds of armes must I at last be faine
And Ladies love to leave, so dearely bought?'
'What need of armes, where peace doth ay remaine,'
(Said he) 'and bitter battailes all are fought?
As for loose loves, they'are vaine, and vanish into nought.'

LXIII

'O! let me not,' (quoth he) 'then turne againe
Backe to the world, whose joyes so fruitlesse are;
But let me heare for aie in peace remaine,
Or streightway on that last long voiage fare,

[1] **suitt**, pursuit. [2] **presage**, point out.

That nothing may my present hope empare.'
'That may not be,' (said he) 'ne maist thou yitt
Forgoe that royal maides bequeathed care,
Who did her cause into thy hand committ,
Till from her cursed foe thou have her freely quitt.'

LXIV

'Then shall I soone,' (quoth he) 'so God me grace,
Abett that virgins cause disconsolate,
And shortly back returne unto this place,
To walke this way in Pilgrims poore estate.
But now aread, old father, why of late
Didst thou behight me borne of English blood,
Whom all a Faeries sonne doen nominate?'
'That word shall I,' (said he) 'avouchen good,
Sith to thee is unknowne the cradle of thy brood.

LXV

'For, well I wote, thou springst from ancient race
Of Saxon kinges, that have with mightie hand,
And many bloody battailes fought in face,
High reard their royall throne in Britans land,
And vanquisht them, unable to withstand:
From thence a Faery thee unweeting reft,
There as thou slepst in tender swadling band,
And her base Elfin brood there for thee left:
Such, men do Chaungelings call, so chaung'd by Faeries theft.

LXVI

'Thence she thee brought into this Faery lond,
And in an heaped furrow did thee hyde;
Where thee a Ploughman all unweeting fond,
As he his toylesome teme that way did guyde,

And brought thee up in ploughmans state to byde,
Whereof Georgos[1] he thee gave to name;
Till prickt with courage, and thy forces pryde,
To Faery court thou cam'st to seek for fame,
And prove thy puissant armes, as seemes thee best became.'[2]

LXVII

'O holy Sire!' (quoth he) 'how shall I quight
The many favours I with thee have fownd,
That hast my name and nation redd aright,
And taught the way that does to heaven bownd!'[3]
This saide, adowne he looked to the grownd
To have returnd; but dazed were his eyne
Through passing brightnes, which did quite confound
His feeble sence, and too exceeding shyne.
So darke are earthly thinges compard to things divine.

LXVIII

At last, whenas himselfe he gan to fynd,
To Una back he cast him to retyre,
Who him awaited still with pensive mynd.
Great thankes, and goodly meed, to that good syre
He thens departing gave for his paynes hyre
So came to Una, who him joyd to see;
And, after litle rest, gan him desyre
Of her adventure myndfull for to bee.
So leave they take of Cælia and her daughters three.

[1] **Georgos**, Greek, meaning husbandman.

[2] **seemes thee best became**, it seems was most fitting for thee.

[3] **bownd**, lead.

CANTO XI

The knight with that old Dragon fights
Two days incessantly:
The third him overthrowes, and gayns
Most glorious victory.

I

High time now gan it wex for Una fayre
To thinke of those her captive Parents deare,
And their forwasted kingdom to repayre:
Whereto whenas they now approched neare,
With hartie wordes her knight she gan to cheare,
And in her modest maner thus bespake:
'Deare knight, as deare as ever knight was deare,
That all these sorrowes suffer for my sake,
High heven behold the tedious toyle ye for me take!

II

'Now are we come unto my native soyle,
And to the place where all our perilles dwell;
Here hauntes that feend, and does his dayly spoyle;
Therefore, henceforth, bee at your keeping well,
And ever ready for your foeman fell:
The sparke of noble corage now awake,
And strive your excellent selfe to excell:
That shall ye evermore renowmed make
Above all knights on earth, that batteill undertake.'

III

And pointing forth, 'Lo! yonder is,' (said she)
'The brasen towre, in which my parents deare
For dread of that huge feend emprisond be;
Whom I from far see on the walles appeare,

Whose sight my feeble soule doth greatly cheare:
And on the top of all I do espye
The watchman wayting tydings glad to heare;
That, (O my Parents!) might I happily
Unto you bring, to ease you of your misery!'

IV

With that they heard a roaring hideous sownd,
That all the ayre with terror filled wyde,
And seemd uneath to shake the stedfast ground.
Eftsoones that dreadful Dragon they espyde,
Where stretcht he lay upon the sunny side
Of a great hill, himselfe like a great hill:
But, all so soone as he from far descryde
Those glistring armes that heven with light did fill,
He rousd himselfe full blyth, and hastned them untill.

V

Then badd the knight his Lady yede[1] aloof,
And to an hill herselfe withdraw asyde;
From whence she might behold that battailles proof,
And eke be safe from daunger far descryde.
She him obayd, and turnd a little wyde. —
Now, O thou sacred Muse![2] most learned Dame,
Fayre ympe of Phœbus and his aged bryde,[3]
The Nourse of time and everlasting fame,
That warlike handes ennoblest with immortall name;

VI

O! gently come into my feeble brest;
Come gently, but not with that mightie rage,

[1] **yede**, go. [2] **sacred Muse**, Clio.
[3] **aged bryde**, Mnemosyne = memory.

Wherewith the martiall troupes thou doest infest,
And hartes of great Heroës doest enrage,
That nought their kindled corage may aswage:
Soone as thy dreadfull trompe begins to sownd,
The God of warre with his fiers equipage
Thou doest awake, sleepe never he so sownd;
And scared nations doest with horror sterne astownd.

VII

Fayre Goddesse, lay that furious fitt[1] asyde,
Till I of warres and bloody Mars doe sing,
And Bryton fieldes with Sarazin blood bedyde,
Twixt that great faery Queene and Paynim king,
That with their horror heven and earth did ring;
A worke of labour long, and endlesse prayse:
But now a while lett downe that haughtie string,
And to my tunes thy second tenor[2] rayse,
That I this man of God his godly armes may blaze.[3]

VIII

By this, the dreadful Beast drew nigh to hand,
Halfe flying and halfe footing in his haste,
That with his largenesse measured much land,
And made wide shadow under his huge waste,
As mountaine doth the valley overcaste.
Approching nigh, he reared high afore
His body monstrous, horrible, and vaste;
Which, to increase his wondrous greatnes more,
Was swoln with wrath and poyson, and with bloody gore;

[1] **fitt**, strain.
[2] **second tenor**, aiding voice.
[3] **blaze**, blazon forth.

IX

And over all with brasen scales was armd,
Like plated cote of steele, so couched neare
That nought mote perce; ne might his corse bee harmd
With dint of swerd, nor push of pointed speare:
Which as an Eagle, seeing pray appeare,
His aery plumes doth rouze, full rudely dight;
So shaked he, that horror was to heare:
For as the clashing of an Armor bright,
Such noyse his rouzed scales did send unto the knight.

X

His flaggy winges, when forth he did display,
Were like two sayles, in which the hollow wynd
Is gathered full, and worketh speedy way:
And eke the pennes,[1] that did his pineons bynd,
Were like mayne-yardes with flying canvas lynd;
With which whenas him list the ayre to beat,
And there by force unwonted passage fynd,
The cloudes before him fledd for terror great,
And all the hevens stood still amazed with his threat.

XI

His huge long tayle, wownd up in hundred foldes,
Does overspred his long bras-scaly back,
Whose wreathed boughtes[2] when ever he unfoldes,
And thick entangled knots adown does slack,
Bespotted as with shieldes of red and blacke,
It sweepeth all the land behind him farre,
And of three furlongs does but litle lacke;

[1] pennes, feathers. [2] boughtes, folds.

And at the point two stinges in fixed arre,
Both deadly sharp, that sharpest steele exceeden farre.

XII

But stinges and sharpest steele did far exceed
The sharpnesse of his cruel rending clawes:
Dead was it sure, as sure as death in deed,
What ever thing does touch his ravenous pawes,
Or what within his reach he ever drawes.
But his most hideous head my tongue to tell
Does tremble; for his deepe devouring jawes
Wyde gaped, like the griesly mouth of hell,
Through which into his darke abysse all ravin fell.

XIII

And, that more wondrous was, in either jaw
Three ranckes of yron teeth enraunged were,
In which yett trickling blood, and gobbets raw,
Of late devoured bodies did appeare,
That sight thereof bredd cold congealed feare;
Which to increase, and all atonce to kill,
A cloud of smoothering smoke, and sulphure seare,[1]
Out of his stinking gorge forth steemed still,
That all the ayre about with smoke and stench did fill.

XIV

His blazing eyes, like two bright shining shieldes,
Did burne with wrath, and sparkled living fyre:
As two broad Beacons, sett in open fieldes,
Send forth their flames far off to every shyre,
And warning give that enimies conspyre
With fire and sword the region to invade:
So flam'd his eyne with rage and rancorous yre;

[1] **seare**, burning.

But far within, as in a hollow glade,
Those glaring lampes were sett that made a dreadfull shade.

XV

So dreadfully he towardes him did pas,
Forelifting up a-loft his speckled brest,
And often bounding on the brused gras,
As for great joyance of his newcome guest.
Eftsoones he gan advance his haughty crest,
As chauffed Bore his bristles doth upreare;
And shoke his scales to battaile ready drest,
That made the Redcrosse knight nigh quake for feare,
As bidding bold defyaunce to his foeman neare.

XVI

The knight gan fayrely couch his steady speare,
And fiersely ran at him with rigorous might:
The pointed steele, arriving rudely theare,
His harder hyde would nether perce nor bight,
But, glauncing by, foorth passed forward right.
Yet sore amoved with so puissaunt push,
The wrathfull beast about him turned light,
And him so rudely, passing by, did brush
With his long tayle, that horse and man to ground did rush.

XVII

Both horse and man up lightly rose againe,
And fresh encounter towardes him addrest;
But th' ydle stroke yet backe recoyld in vaine,
And found no place his deadly point to rest.
Exceeding rage enflam'd the furious Beast,
To be avenged of so great despight;
For never felt his imperceable brest

So wondrous force from hand of living wight;
Yet had he prov'd the powre of many a puissant knight.

XVIII

Then, with his waving wings displayed wyde,
Himselfe up high he lifted from the ground,
And with strong flight did forcibly divyde
The yielding ayre, which nigh too feeble found
Her flitting parts, and element unsound,
To beare so great a weight: he, cutting way
With his broad sayles, about him soared round;
At last, low stouping with unweldy sway,
Snatcht up both horse and man, to beare them quite away.

XIX

Long he them bore above the subject plaine,
So far as Ewghen bow a shaft may send,
Till struggling strong did him at last constraine
To let them downe before his flightes end:
As hagard [1] hauke, presuming to contend
With hardy fowle above his hable might,
His wearie pounces [2] all in vaine doth spend
To trusse [3] the pray too heavy for his flight;
Which, comming down to ground, does free it selfe by fight.

XX

He so disseized [4] of his gryping grosse,[5]
The knight his thrillant speare againe assayd
In his bras-plated body to embosse,
And three mens strength unto the stroake he layd;

[1] **hagard**, untrained.
[2] **pounces**, claws.
[3] **trusse**, hold firmly.
[4] **disseized**, dispossessed.
[5] **grosse**, heavy.

Wherewith the stiffe beame quaked as affrayd,
And glauncing from his scaly necke did glyde
Close under his left wing, then broad displayd:
The percing steele there wrought a wound full wyde,
That with the uncouth smart the Monster lowdly cryde.

XXI

He cryde, as raging seas are wont to rore
When wintry storme his wrathful wreck does threat;
The rolling billowes beate the ragged shore,
As they the earth would shoulder from her seat;
And greedy gulfe does gape, as he would eat
His neighbour element in his revenge:
Then gin the blustring brethren [1] boldly threat
To move the world from off his stedfast henge,
And boystrous battaile make, each other to avenge.

XXII

The steely head stuck fast still in his flesh,
Till with his cruell clawes he snatcht the wood,
And quite a sunder broke. Forth flowed fresh
A gushing river of blacke gory blood,
That drowned all the land whereon he stood;
The streame thereof would drive a water-mill:
Trebly augmented was his furious mood
With bitter sence of his deepe rooted ill,
That flames of fire he threw forth from his large nose-thril.

XXIII

His hideous tayle then hurled he about,
And therewith all enwrapt the nimble thyes
Of his froth-fomy steed, whose courage stout

[1] **blustring brethren**, the winds.

Striving to loose the knott that fast him tyes,
Himselfe in streighter bandes too rash implyes,[1]
That to the ground he is perforce constraynd
To throw his ryder; who can quickly ryse
From off the earth, with durty blood distaynd,
For that reprochfull fall right fowly he disdaynd;

XXIV

And fercely tooke his trenchand blade in hand,
With which he stroke so furious and so fell,
That nothing seemd the puissaunce could withstand:
Upon his crest the hardned yron fell,
But his more hardned crest was armd so well,
That deeper dint therein it would not make;
Yet so extremely did the buffe[2] him quell,
That from thenceforth he shund the like to take,
But when he saw them come he did them still forsake.

XXV

The knight was wroth to see his stroke beguyld,
And smot againe with more outrageous might;
But backe againe the sparcling steele recoyld,
And left not any marke where it did light,
As if in Adamant rocke it had beene pight.
The beast, impatient of his smarting wound
And of so fierce and forcible despight,
Thought with his winges to stye[3] above the ground;
But his late wounded wing unserviceable found.

XXVI

Then full of griefe and anguish vehement,
He lowdly brayd, that like was never heard;

[1] **implyes**, enfolds. [2] **buffe**, blow. [3] **stye**, rise.

And from his wide devouring oven sent
A flake of fire, that flashing in his beard
Him all amazd, and almost made afeard :
The scorching flame sore swinged [1] all his face,
And through his armour all his body seard,
That he could not endure so cruell cace,
But thought his armes to leave, and helmet to unlace.

XXVII

Not that great Champion [2] of the antique world,
Whom famous Poetes verse so much doth vaunt,
And hath for twelve huge labours high extold,
So many furies and sharpe fits did haunt,
When him the poysoned garment did enchaunt,
When Centaures blood and bloody verses charmd ;
As did this knight twelve thousand dolours daunt,
Whom fyrie steele now burnt, that erst him armd ;
That erst him goodly armd, now most of all him harmd.

XXVIII

Faynt, wearie, sore, emboyled,[3] grieved, brent,
With heat, toyle, wounds, armes, smart, and inward fire,
That never man such mischiefes did torment :
Death better were ; death did he oft desire,
But death will never come when needes require.
Whom so dismayd when that his foe beheld,
He cast to suffer him no more respire,
But gan his sturdy sterne [4] about to weld,
And him so strongly stroke, that to the ground him feld.

[1] **swinged**, singed.

[2] **Champion**, Hercules. His wife, hoping to recover his love, sent him a garment, steeped in a centaur's blood, which clung to him with fatal closeness.

[3] **emboyled**, heated. [4] **sterne**, tail.

XXIX

It fortuned, (as fayre it then befell)
Behynd his backe, unweeting, where he stood,
Of auncient time there was a springing well,
From which fast trickled forth a silver flood,
Full of great vertues, and for med'cine good:
Whylome, before that cursed Dragon got
That happy land, and all with innocent blood
Defyld those sacred waves, it rightly hot [1]
The well of life, ne yet his vertues had forgot:

XXX

For unto life the dead it could restore,
And guilt of sinfull crimes cleane wash away;
Those that with sicknesse were infected sore
It could recure; and aged long decay
Renew, as one were borne that very day.
Both Silo [2] this, and Jordan,[3] did excell,
And th' English Bath, and eke the German Spau:[4]
Ne can Cephise,[5] nor Hebrus,[6] match this well:
Into the same the knight back overthrowen fell.

[1] **hot**, was called.

[2] **Silo**, Siloam, a pool in which Christ bade the blind man wash to regain his sight.

[3] **Jordan**. Naaman, the leper, was healed by washing in the river Jordan.

[4] **Spau**, Spa, a famous resort on account of the mineral waters.

[5] **Cephise**, "Bœotian Cephissus, whose waters turned sheep-fleece to a white colour." — Percival.

[6] **Hebrus**, the river down which the head and the lyre of Orpheus floated, making music.

XXXI

Now gan the golden Phœbus for to steepe
His fierie face in billowes of the west,
And his faint steedes watred in Ocean deepe,
Whiles from their journall [1] labours they did rest;
When that infernall Monster, having kest
His wearie foe into that living well,
Gan high advaunce his broad discoloured brest
Above his wonted pitch, with countenance fell,
And clapt his yron wings as victor he did dwell.

XXXII

Which when his pensive Lady saw from farre,
Great woe and sorrow did her soule assay,
As weening that the sad end of the warre;
And gan to highest God entirely pray
That feared chaunce from her to turne away:
With folded hands, and knees full lowly bent,
All night shee watcht, ne once adowne would lay
Her dainty limbs in her sad dreriment,
But praying still did wake, and waking did lament.

XXXIII

The morrow next gan earely to appeare,
That Titan rose to runne his daily race;
But earely, ere the morrow next gan reare
Out of the sea faire Titans deawy face,
Up rose the gentle virgin from her place,
And looked all about, if she might spy
Her loved knight to move his manly pace:
For she had great doubt of his safety,
Since late she saw him fall before his enimy.

[1] journall, daily.

XXXIV

At last she saw where he upstarted brave
Out of the well, wherein he drenched lay:
As Eagle, fresh out of the ocean wave,
Where he hath lefte his plumes all hory gray,
And deckt himselfe with fethers youthly gay,
Like Eyas [1] hauke up mounts unto the skies,
His newly-budded pineons to assay,
And marveiles at himselfe stil as he flies:
So new this new-borne knight to battell new did rise.

XXXV

Whom when the damned feend so fresh did spy,
No wonder if he wondred at the sight,
And doubted whether his late enimy
It were, or other new supplied knight.
He now, to prove his late-renewed might,
High brandishing his bright deaw-burning [2] blade,
Upon his crested scalp so sore did smite,
That to the scull a yawning wound it made:
The deadly dint his dulled sences all dismaid.

XXXVI

I wote not whether the revenging steele
Were hardned with that holy water dew
Wherein he fell, or sharper edge did feele,
Or his baptized hands now greater grew,
Or other secret vertue did ensew;
Els never could the force of fleshly arme,
Ne molten mettall, in his blood embrew;

[1] **Eyas**, young.
[2] **deaw-burning**, shining with dew.

For till that stownd could never wight him harme
By subtilty, nor slight, nor might, nor mighty charme.

XXXVII

The cruell wound enraged him so sore,
That loud he yelled for exceeding paine;
As hundred ramping Lions seemd to rore,
Whom ravenous hunger did thereto constraine:
Then gan he tosse aloft his stretched traine,
And therewith scourge the buxome [1] aire so sore,
That to his force to yielden it was faine;
Ne ought his sturdy strokes might stand afore,
That high trees overthrew, and rocks in peeces tore.

XXXVIII

The same advauncing high above his head,
With sharpe intended sting so rude him smott,
That to the earth him drove, as stricken dead;
Ne living wight would have him life behott: [2]
The mortall sting his angry needle shott
Quite through his shield, and in his shoulder seasd,
Where fast it stucke, ne would thereout be gott:
The griefe thereof him wondrous sore diseasd,
Ne might his rancling paine with patience be appeasd.

XXXIX

But yet, more mindfull of his honour deare
Then of the grievous smart which him did wring,
From loathed soile he can him lightly reare,
And strove to loose the far infixed sting:
Which when in vaine he tryde with struggeling,
Inflam'd with wrath, his raging blade he hefte,[3]

[1] **buxome**, yielding. [2] **behott**, promised. [3] **hefte**, raised.

And strooke so strongly, that the knotty string
Of his huge taile he quite a sonder clefte;
Five joints thereof he hewd, and but the stump him lefte.

XL

Hart cannot thinke what outrage and what cries,
With fowle enfouldred[1] smoake and flashing fire,
The hell-bred beast threw forth unto the skies,
That all was covered with darknesse dire:
Then, fraught with rancour and engorged yre,
He cast at once him to avenge for all;
And, gathering up himselfe out of the mire
With his uneven wings, did fiercely fall
Upon his sunne-bright shield, and grypt it fast withall.

XLI

Much was the man encombred with his hold,
In feare to lose his weapon in his paw,
Ne wist yett how his talaunts[2] to unfold;
Nor harder was from Cerberus greedy jaw
To plucke a bone, then from his cruell claw
To reave[3] by strength the griped gage away:
Thrise he assayd it from his foote to draw,
And thrise in vaine to draw it did assay;
It booted nought to thinke to robbe him of his pray.

XLII

Tho, when he saw no power might prevaile,
His trusty sword he cald to his last aid,
Wherewith he fiersly did his foe assaile,
And double[4] blowes about him stoutly laid,

[1] **enfouldred**, literally, mixed with lightning.
[2] **talaunts**, talons. [3] **reave**, take away. [4] **double**, redoubled.

That glauncing fire out of the yron plaid,
As sparkles from the Andvile use to fly,
When heavy hammers on the wedge are swaid:
Therewith at last he forst him to unty
One of his grasping feete, him to defend thereby.

XLIII

The other foote, fast fixed on his shield,
Whenas no strength nor stroks mote him constraine
To loose, ne yet the warlike pledge to yield,
He smott thereat with all his might and maine,
That nought so wondrous puissaunce might sustaine:
Upon the joint the lucky steele did light,
And made such way that hewd it quite in twaine;
The paw yett missed not his minisht might,
But hong still on the shield, as it at first was pight.

XLIV

For griefe thereof and divelish despight,
From his infernall fournace forth he threw
Huge flames that dimmed all the hevens light,
Enrold in duskish smoke and brimstone blew:
As burning Aetna from his boyling stew
Doth belch out flames, and rockes in peeces broke,
And ragged ribs of mountaines molten new,
Enwrapt in coleblacke clowds and filthy smoke,
That al the land with stench and heven with horror choke.

XLV

The heate whereof, and harmefull pestilence,
So sore him noyd, that forst him to retire
A little backeward for his best defence,
To save his body from the scorching fire,

Which he from hellish entrailes did expire.
It chaunst, (eternall God that chaunce did guide)
As he recoiled backeward, in the mire
His nigh foreweried feeble feet did slide,
And downe he fell, with dread of shame sore terrifide.

XLVI

There grew a goodly tree him faire beside,
Loaden with fruit and apples rosy redd,
As they in pure vermilion had been dide,
Whereof great vertues over-all were redd;[1]
For happy life to all which thereon fedd,
And life eke everlasting did befall:
Great God it planted in that blessed stedd[2]
With his Almighty hand, and did it call
The tree of life, the crime of our first fathers fall.

XLVII

In all the world like was not to be fownd,
Save in that soile, where all good things did grow,
And freely sprong out of the fruitfull grownd,
As incorrupted Nature did them sow,
Till that dredd Dragon all did overthrow.
Another like faire tree eke grew thereby,
Whereof whoso did eat, eftsoones did know
Both good and ill. O mournfull memory!
That tree through one mans fault hath doen us all to dy.

XLVIII

From that first tree forth flowd, as from a well,
A trickling streame of Balme, most soveraine
And dainty deare, which on the ground still fell,

[1] redd, known. [2] stedd, place.

And overflowed all the fertile plaine,
As it had deawed bene with timely raine:
Life and long health that gracious ointment gave,
And deadly wounds could heale, and reare againe
The sencelesse corse appointed for the grave:
Into that same he fell, which did from death him save.

XLIX

For nigh thereto the ever damned Beast
Durst not approch, for he was deadly made,
And al that life preserved did detest;
Yet he it oft adventur'd to invade.
By this the drouping day-light gan to fade,
And yield his rowme to sad succeeding night,
Who with her sable mantle gan to shade
The face of earth and wayes of living wight,
And high her burning torch set up in heaven bright.

L

When gentle Una saw the second fall
Of her deare knight, who, weary of long fight
And faint through losse of blood, moov'd not at all,
But lay, as in a dreame of deepe delight,
Besmeard with pretious Balme, whose vertuous might
Did heale his woundes, and scorching heat alay;
Againe she stricken was with sore affright,
And for his safetie gan devoutly pray,
And watch the noyous night, and wait for joyous day.

LI

The joyous day gan early to appeare;
And fayre Aurora from the deawy bed
Of aged Tithone gan herselfe to reare

With rosy cheekes, for shame as blushing red:
Her golden locks for hast were loosely shed
About her eares, when Una her did marke
Clymbe to her charet, all with flowers spred,
From heven high to chace the chearelesse darke;
With mery note her lowd salutes the mounting larke.

LII

Then freshly up arose the doughty knight,
All healed of his hurts and woundes wide,
And did himselfe to battaile ready dight;
Whose early foe awaiting him beside
To have devourd, so soone as day he spyde,
When now he saw himselfe so freshly reare,
As if late fight had nought him damnifyde,
He woxe dismaid, and gan his fate to feare:
Nathlesse with wonted rage he him advaunced neare.

LIII

And in his first encounter, gaping wyde,
He thought attonce him to have swallowd quight,
And rusht upon him with outragious pryde;
Who him rencountring fierce, as hauke in flight,
Perforce rebutted[1] backe. The weapon bright,
Taking advantage of his open jaw,
Ran through his mouth with so importune might,
That deepe emperst his darksom hollow maw,
And, back retyrd, his life blood forth with all did draw.

LIV

So downe he fell, and forth his life did breath,
That vanisht into smoke and cloudes swift;

[1] rebutted, caused to recoil.

So downe he fell, that th' earth him underneath
Did grone, as feeble so great load to lift;
So downe he fell, as an huge rocky clift,
Whose false foundacion waves have washt away,
With dreadfull poyse[1] is from the mayneland rift,
And rolling downe great Neptune doth dismay:
So downe he fell, and like an heaped mountaine lay.

LV

The knight him selfe even trembled at his fall,
So huge and horrible a masse it seemd;
And his deare Lady, that beheld it all,
Durst not approch for dread which she misdeemd;
But yet at last, whenas the direfull feend
She saw not stirre, off-shaking vaine affright
She nigher drew, and saw that joyous end:
Then God she praysd, and thankt her faithfull knight,
That had atchievde so great a conquest by his might.

CANTO XII

Fayre Una to the Redcrosse Knight
Betrouthed is with joy:
Though false Duessa, it to barre,
Her false sleightes doe imploy.

I

Behold! I see the haven nigh at hand
To which I meane my wearie course to bend;
Vere[2] the maine shete, and beare up with the land,
The which afore is fayrly to be kend,[3]
And seemeth safe from storms that may offend;

[1] poyse, force. [2] Vere, change the direction of.
[3] kend, known.

There this fayre virgin wearie of her way
Must landed bee, now at her journeyes end;
There eke my feeble barke a while may stay,
Till mery wynd and weather call her thence away.

II

Scarsely had Phoebus in the glooming East
Yett harnessed his fyrie-footed teeme,
Ne reard above the earth his flaming creast,
When the last deadly smoke aloft did steeme,
That signe of last outbreathed life did seeme
Unto the watchman on the castle-wall;
Who thereby dead that balefull Beast did deeme,
And to his Lord and Lady lowd gan call,
To tell how he had seene the Dragons fatall fall.

III

Uprose with hasty joy, and feeble speed,
That aged Syre, the Lord of all that land,
And looked forth, to weet if trew indeed
Those tydinges were, as he did understand:
Which whenas trew by tryall he out fond,
He badd to open wyde his brasen gate,
Which long time had beene shut, and out of hond[1]
Proclaymed joy and peace through all his state;
For dead now was their foe, which them forrayed[2] late.

IV

Then gan triumphant Trompets sownd on hye,
That sent to heven the ecchoed report

[1] **out of hond**, at once. [2] **forrayed**, ravaged.

Of their new joy, and happie victory
Gainst him, that had them long opprest with tort,[1]
And fast imprisoned in sieged fort.
Then all the people, as in solemne feast,
To him assembled with one full consort,[2]
Rejoycing at the fall of that great beast,
From whose eternall bondage now they were releast.

V

Forth came that auncient Lord, and aged Queene,
Arayd in antique robes downe to the grownd,
And sad habiliments right well beseene:
A noble crew about them waited rownd
Of sage and sober peres, all gravely gownd;
Whom far before did march a goodly band
Of tall young men, all hable armes to sownd;
But now they laurell braunches bore in hand,
Glad signe of victory and peace in all their land.

VI

Unto that doughtie Conquerour they came,
And him before themselves prostrating low,
Their Lord and Patrone loud did him proclame,
And at his feet their lawrell boughes did throw.
Soone after them, all dauncing on a row,
The comely virgins came, with girlands dight,
As fresh as flowres in medow greene doe grow
When morning deaw upon their leaves doth light;
And in their handes sweet Timbrels[3] all upheld on hight.

[1] **tort**, wrong.
[2] **consort**, company.
[3] **Timbrels**, instruments of music, similar to a drum.

VII

And them before the fry[1] of children yong
Their wanton sportes and childish mirth did play,
And to the Maydens sownding tymbrels song
In well attuned notes a joyous lay,
And made delightfull musick all the way,
Untill they came where that faire virgin stood:
As fayre Diana in fresh sommers day
Beholdes her nymphes enraung'd in shady wood,
Some wrestle, some do run, some bathe in christall flood.

VIII

So she beheld those maydens meriment
With chearefull vew; who, when to her they came,
Themselves to ground with gracious humblesse bent,
And her ador'd by honorable name,
Lifting to heven her everlasting fame:
Then on her head they sett a girlond greene,
And crowned her twixt earnest and twixt game:
Who, in her self-resemblance well beseene,
Did seeme, such as she was, a goodly maiden Queene.

IX

And after all the raskall many[2] ran,
Heaped together in rude rablement,
To see the face of that victorious man,
Whom all admired as from heaven sent,
And gazd upon with gaping wonderment;
But when they came where that dead Dragon lay,
Stretcht on the ground in monstrous large extent,

[1] **fry**, crowd.
[2] **many**, multitude.

The sight with ydle feare did them dismay,
Ne durst approch him nigh to touch, or once assay.

X

Some feard, and fledd; some feard, and well it fayndt;
One, that would wiser seeme then all the rest,
Warnd him not touch, for yet perhaps remaynd
Some lingring life within his hollow brest,
Or in his wombe might lurke some hidden nest
Of many Dragonettes, his fruitfull seede:
Another saide, that in his eyes did rest
Yet sparckling fyre, and badd thereof take heed;
Another said, he saw him move his eyes indeed.

XI

One mother, whenas her foolehardy chyld
Did come too neare, and with his talants play,
Halfe dead through feare, her litle babe revyld,
And to her gossibs [1] gan in counsell say;
'How can I tell, but that his talants may
Yet scratch my sonne, or rend his tender hand?'
So diversly them selves in vaine they fray;[2]
Whiles some more bold to measure him nigh stand,
To prove how many acres he did spred of land.

XII

Thus flocked all the folke him rownd about;
The whiles that hoarie king, with all his traine,
Being arrived where that champion stout
After his foes defeasaunce [3] did remaine,

[1] gossibs, gossips, friends. [2] fray, frighten.
[3] defeasaunce, defeat.

Him goodly greetes, and fayre does entertayne
With princely gifts of yvory and gold,
And thousand thankes him yeeldes for all his paine.
Then when his daughter deare he does behold,
Her dearely doth imbrace, and kisseth manifold.

XIII

And after to his Pallace he them bringes,
With shaumes, and trompets, and with Clarions[1] sweet;
And all the way the joyous people singes,
And with their garments strowes the paved street;
Whence mounting up, they fynd purveyaunce[2] meet
Of all, that royall Princes court became;
And all the floore was underneath their feet
Bespredd with costly scarlott of great name,
On which they lowly sitt, and fitting purpose frame.

XIV

What needes me tell their feast and goodly guize,
In which was nothing riotous nor vaine?
What needes of dainty dishes to devize,
Of comely services, or courtly trayne?
My narrow leaves cannot in them contayne
The large discourse of roiall Princes state.
Yet was their manner then but bare and playne;
For th' antique world excesse and pryde did hate:
Such proud luxurious pompe is swollen up but late.

XV

Then, when with meates and drinkes of every kinde
Their fervent appetites they quenched had,

[1] **shaumes, trompets, Clarions,** three kinds of trumpets.
[2] **purveyaunce,** provision.

That auncient Lord gan fit occasion finde,
Of straunge adventures, and of perils sad
Which in his travell him befallen had,
For to demaund of his renowmed guest:
Who then with utt'rance grave, and count'nance sad,
From poynt to poynt, as is before exprest,
Discourst his voyage long, according his request.

XVI

Great pleasure, mixt with pittiful regard,
That godly King and Queene did passionate,[1]
Whyles they his pittifull adventures heard;
That oft they did lament his lucklesse state,
And often blame the too importune[2] fate
That heapd on him so many wrathfull wreakes;[3]
For never gentle knight, as he of late,
So tossed was in fortunes cruell freakes:
And all the while salt teares bedeawd the hearers cheaks.

XVII

Then sayd that royall Pere in sober wise;
'Deare Sonne, great beene the evils which ye bore
From first to last in your late enterprise,
That I note[4] whether praise or pitty more;
For never living man, I weene, so sore
In sea of deadly daungers was distrest:
But since now safe ye seised[5] have the shore,
And well arrived are, (high God be blest!)
Let us devize of ease and everlasting rest.'

[1] **passionate**, express feelingly. [2] **importune**, violent.
[3] **wreakes**, vengeances. [4] **note**, ne wot = know not
[5] **seised**, reached.

XVIII

'Ah dearest Lord!' said then that doughty knight,
'Of ease or rest I may not yet devize;
For by the faith which I to armes have plight,
I bownden am streight after this emprize,
As that your daughter can ye well advize,
Backe to retourne to that great Faery Queene,
And her to serve sixe yeares in warlike wize,
Gainst that proud Paynim king that works her teene:
Therefore I ought crave pardon, till I there have beene.'

XIX

'Unhappy falls that hard necessity,'
(Quoth he) 'the troubler of my happy peace,
And vowed foe of my felicity;
Ne I against the same can justly preace:
But since that band ye cannot now release,
Nor doen undo, (for vowes may not be vayne)
Soone as the terme of those six yeares shall cease,
Ye then shall hither backe retourne agayne,
The marriage to accomplish vowd betwixt you twayn.

XX

'Which, for my part, I covet to performe
In sort as through the world I did proclame,
That who-so kild that monster most deforme,
And him in hardy battayle overcame,
Should have mine onely daughter to his Dame,
And of my kingdome heyre apparaunt bee:
Therefore, since now to thee perteynes the same
By dew desert of noble chevalree,
Both daughter and eke kingdome lo! I yield to thee.'

XXI

Then forth he called that his daughter fayre,
The fairest Un', his onely daughter deare,
His onely daughter and his only hayre ;
Who forth proceeding with sad sober cheare,
As bright as doth the morning starre appeare
Out of the East, with flaming lockes bedight,
To tell that dawning day is drawing neare,
And to the world does bring long-wished light :
So faire and fresh that Lady shewd herselfe in sight.

XXII

So faire and fresh, as freshest flowre in May ;
For she had layd her mournefull stole aside,
And widow-like sad wimple [1] throwne away,
Wherewith her heavenly beautie she did hide,
Whiles on her wearie journey she did ride ;
And on her now a garment she did weare
All lilly white, withoutten spot or pride,
That seemd like silke and silver woven neare ;
But neither silke nor silver therein did appeare.

XXIII

The blazing brightnesse of her beauties beame,
And glorious light of her sunshyny face,
To tell were as to strive against the streame :
My ragged rimes are all too rude and bace
Her heavenly lineaments for to enchace.[2]
Ne wonder ; for her own deare loved knight,
All were she daily with himselfe in place,

[1] wimple, compare stanza IV, canto I.
[2] enchace, adorn.

Did wonder much at her celestial sight:
Oft had he seene her faire, but never so faire dight.

XXIV

So fairely dight when she in presence came,
She to her Syre made humble reverence,
And bowed low, that her right well became,
And added grace unto her excellence:
Who with great wisedome and grave eloquence
Thus gan to say — But, eare he thus had sayd,
With flying speede, and seeming great pretence,
Came running in, much like a man dismayd,
A Messenger with letters, which his message sayd.

XXV

All in the open hall amazed stood
At suddeinnesse of that unwary sight,
And wondred at his breathlesse hasty mood:
But he for nought would stay his passage right,
Till fast before the king he did alight;
Where falling flat great humblesse he did make,
And kist the ground whereon his foot was pight;
Then to his handes that writt he did betake,
Which he disclosing read thus, as the paper spake:

XXVI

'To thee, most mighty king of Eden fayre,
Her greeting sends in these sad lines addrest
The wofull daughter and forsaken heyre
Of that great Emperour of all the West;
And bids thee be advized for the best,
Ere thou thy daughter linck, in holy band
Of wedlocke, to that new unknowen guest:

For he already plighted his right hand
Unto another love, and to another land.

XXVII

'To me, sad mayd, or rather widow sad,
He was affyaunced long time before,
And sacred pledges he both gave, and had,
False erraunt knight, infamous, and forswore!
Witnesse the burning Altars, which he swore,
And guilty heavens of his bold perjury;
Which though he hath polluted oft of yore,
Yet I to them for judgement just doe fly,
And them conjure t' avenge this shamefull injury.

XXVIII

'Therefore, since mine he is, or free or bond,
Or false or trew, or living or else dead,
Withhold, O soverayne Prince! your hasty hond
From knitting league with him, I you aread;
Ne weene my right with strength adowne to tread,
Through weaknesse of my widowhed or woe;
For truth is strong her rightfull cause to plead,
And shall finde friends, if need requireth soe.
So bids thee well to fare, Thy neither friend nor foe,
Fidessa.'

XXIX

When he these bitter byting wordes had red,
The tydings straunge did him abashed make,
That still he sate long time astonished,
As in great muse, ne word to creature spake.
At last his solemn silence thus he brake,
With doubtfull eyes fast fixed on his guest:
'Redoubted knight, that for myne only sake

Thy life and honor late adventurest,
Let nought be hid from me that ought to be exprest.

XXX

'What meane these bloody vowes and idle threats,
Throwne out from womanish impatient mynd?
What hevens? what altars? what enraged heates,
Here heaped up with termes of love unkynd,
My conscience cleare with guilty bands would bynd?
High God be witnesse that I guiltlesse ame;
But if yourselfe, Sir knight, ye faulty fynd,
Or wrapped be in loves of former Dame,
With cryme doe not it cover, but disclose the same.'

XXXI

To whom the Redcrosse knight this answere sent:
'My Lord, my king, be nought hereat dismayd,
Till well ye wote by grave intendiment,[1]
What woman, and wherefore, doth me upbrayd
With breach of love and loialty betrayd.
It was in my mishaps, as hitherward
I lately traveild, that unwares I strayd
Out of my way, through perils straunge and hard,
That day should faile me ere I had them all declard.

XXXII

'There did I find, or rather I was fownd
Of this false woman that Fidessa hight,
Fidessa hight the falsest Dame on grownd,
Most false Duessa, royall richly dight,
That easy was t' inveigle weaker sight:
Who by her wicked arts and wylie skill,

[1] **intendiment**, consideration.

Too false and strong for earthly skill or might,
Unwares me wrought unto her wicked will,
And to my foe betrayd when least I feared ill.'

XXXIII

Then stepped forth the goodly royall Mayd,
And on the ground herselfe prostrating low,
With sober countenance thus to him sayd:
'O! pardon me, my soveraine Lord, to sheow
The secret treasons, which of late I know
To have bene wrought by that false sorceresse:
Shee, onely she, it is, that earst did throw
This gentle knight into so great distresse,
That death him did awaite in daily wretchednesse.

XXXIV

'And now it seemes, that she suborned hath
This crafty messenger with letters vaine,
To worke new woe and improvided scath,
By breaking of the band betwixt us twaine;
Wherein she used hath the practicke[1] paine
Of this false footman, clokt with simplenesse,
Whome if ye please for to discover plaine,
Ye shall him Archimago find, I ghesse,
The falsest man alive: who tries, shall find no lesse.'

XXXV

The king was greatly moved at her speach;
And, all with suddein indignation fraight,[2]
Bad on that Messenger rude hands to reach.
Eftsoones the Gard, which on his state did wait,
Attacht that faytor false, and bound him strait;

[1] **practicke**, deceitful. [2] **fraight**, freighted.

Who seeming sorely chauffed at his band,
As chained beare whom cruell dogs doe bait,[1]
With ydle force did faine them to withstand,
And often semblaunce made to scape out of their hand.

XXXVI

But they him layd full low in dungeon deepe,
And bound him hand and foote with yron chains;
And with continual watch did warely keepe.
Who then would thinke that by his subtile trains
He could escape fowle death or deadly pains?
Thus, when that Princes wrath was pacifide,
He gan renew the late forbidden bains,[2]
And to the knight his daughter deare he tyde
With sacred rites and vowes for ever to abyde.

XXXVII

His owne two hands the holy knotts did knitt,
That none but death for ever can divide;
His owne two hands, for such a turne most fitt,
The housling[3] fire did kindle and provide,
And holy water thereon sprinckled wide;
At which the bushy Teade[4] a groome did light,
And sacred lamp in secret chamber hide,
Where it should not be quenched day nor night,
For feare of evil fates, but burnen ever bright.

XXXVIII

Then gan they sprinckle all the posts with wine,
And made great feast to solemnize that day:
They all perfumde with frankincense divine,

[1] **bait**, harass.
[2] **bains**, banns.
[3] **housling**, sacramental.
[4] **Teade**, torch.

And precious odours fetcht from far away,
That all the house did sweat with great aray:
And all the while sweete Musicke did apply
Her curious skill the warbling notes to play,
To drive away the dull Melancholy;
The whiles one sung a song of love and jollity.

XXXIX

During the which there was an heavenly noise[1]
Heard sownd through all the Pallace pleasantly,
Like as it had bene many an Angels voice
Singing before th' eternall majesty,
In their trinall triplicities[2] on hye:
Yett wist no creature whence that hevenly sweet
Proceeded, yet each one felt secretly
Himselfe thereby refte of his sences meet,
And ravished with rare impression in his sprite.

XL

Great joy was made that day of young and old,
And solemne feast proclaymd throughout the land,
That their exceeding merth may not be told:
Suffice it heare by signes to understand
The usuall joyes at knitting of loves band.
Thrise happy man the knight himselfe did hold,
Possessed of his Ladies hart and hand;
And ever, when his eie did her behold,
His heart did seeme to melt in pleasures manifold.

[1] **noise**, music.

[2] **trinall triplicities**, the three-fold orders of angels according to mediæval theology = Seraphim, Cherubim, Thrones; Dominations, Virtues, Powers; Principalities, Archangels, Angels.

XLI

Her joyous presence, and sweet company,
In full content he there did long enjoy;
Ne wicked envy, ne vile gealosy,
His deare delights were hable to annoy:
Yet, swimming in that sea of blisfull joy,
He nought forgott how he whilome had sworne,
In case he could that monstrous beast destroy,
Unto his Faery Queene backe to retourne;
The which he shortly did, and Una left to mourne.

XLII

Now, strike your sailes, yee jolly Mariners,
For we be come unto a quiet rode,
Where we must land some of our passengers,
And light this weary vessell of her lode:
Here she a while may make her safe abode,
Till she repaired have her tackles spent,[2]
And wants supplide; And then againe abroad
On the long voiage whereto she is bent:
Well may she speede, and fairely finish her intent!

[1] **rode**, roadstead, place of anchorage.
[2] **spent**, worn out.

SUGGESTIONS FOR STUDY

After reading Spenser's prefatory letter, addressed to Sir Walter Raleigh, in order to understand the general plan of *The Faerie Queene*, read the first book through, slowly, without thinking of the allegory. Later on, after the romance has been discussed, re-read the first book, thinking only of the allegory.

Mediævalism.

1. Collect and classify all details in regard to chivalry: — (*a*) names of different parts of armor; (*b*) names of weapons; (*c*) laws and methods of combat; (*d*) character and vows of the true knight; (*e*) adventures likely to befall a knight.
2. Collect all examples of the supernatural, such as (*a*) disguises; (*b*) transformations; (*c*) use of magic weapons, and the like.
3. Supplement the material that you find in Spenser by reference to works, in the bibliography, dealing with the mediæval world.
4. Define a romance of chivalry, basing your definition upon the first book of *The Faerie Queene*.

The Renaissance.

1. Collect all references to classical mythology and to the Christian religion, and determine why Spenser introduced pagan deities into the story of a Christian knight.
2. Identify as many as possible of Spenser's imitations of classical poets, especially Homer and Virgil, in the use of (*a*) epithet; (*b*) simile; (*c*) incident.
3. Show in what ways Spenser is a representative writer of the period of the Renaissance.

Spenser's Equipment, as a Poet, in Power of Observation.

1. Collect all examples which reveal Spenser's response to physical impressions by references to (*a*) color: — primary colors, gradations, combinations, effects of light and shade; (*b*) form: — outlines, shapes of things, curves, anything

that shows perception of line; (*c*) sound; (*d*) smell; (*e*) taste; (*f*) touch: — distinctions between rough and smooth, warm and cold, wet and dry, heavy and light.

2. Collect all references to trees, flowers, brooks, rivers, fountains, plains, meadows, mountains, clouds, sunshine, and determine what Spenser loved best in nature.
3. Determine the approximate degree of keenness and intensity in Spenser's perception of the external world.

Spenser's Style, Diction, and Versification.

1. Select and analyze the best examples of narration in this book.
2. Select and analyze the best examples of description, noting especially (*a*) those descriptions of landscape, of scene, or of persons which would serve a painter or an engraver for subjects; (*b*) those descriptions of single figures which would serve a sculptor for subjects.
3. Dramatize Canto I, or any other canto.
4. Determine what are the chief excellences and what are the chief defects in Spenser's narrative, and descriptive, and dramatic power.
5. Paraphrase several stanzas and note sentence structure, especially (*a*) inversion of words and phrases; (*b*) archaic idioms; (*c*) omission of words usually kept in prose; (*d*) pleonasm.
6. Study Spenser's use of adjectives and adverbs by rewriting a few stanzas with the omission of all adjectives and adverbs.
7. Study Spenser's choice of words by selecting one of the best descriptive passages and substituting for each word, in turn, three or four synonyms.
8. Collect as many examples as possible of figures of speech.
9. Look carefully for any examples of euphuism.
10. Form an estimate of the number of archaic words used in the first book.
11. Read aloud several stanzas, in the various cantos, and decide how far Spenser was master of melody in verse.
12. Define the Spenserian stanza, after a study of a single stanza, noting (*a*) number of verses; (*b*) number and place of stresses in each verse; (*c*) rime-scheme; (*d*) value and structure of the unique verse, the Alexandrine.
13. Look for examples of onomatopœia.

14. Study Spenser's rimes, with special reference to alliteration.
15. Study Spenser's use of single vowels and consonants in order to discover if he uses special ones more often than others.

The Allegory.

1. Consider Spenser's tendency toward didactic moralizing by collecting all the aphorisms in Book I.
2. Write out carefully the story of Book I, using all the abstract names, Holiness, Truth, etc., asking yourself at every step Spenser's reason for introducing the various incidents
3. Why is Holiness at a disadvantage without Truth?
4. Is Una true, or truthful, or both?
5. How many obstacles does Holiness overcome?
6. How many characters does he recognize as enemies?
7. How many characters does Truth recognize as enemies?
8. How many characters are misled by Hypocrisy?
9. How many characters are misled by Falsehood?
10. Does Holiness change from the beginning of the story to the end?
11. Does Truth change from the beginning to the end?
12. When does Holiness cease from fighting?
13. Which part of the allegory is more interesting, the first or the last, and why?

TABLE OF THE ALLEGORIES

Characters	Spiritual
Gloriana	Glory
Prince Arthure	Magnificence
Redcrosse Knight	Holiness
Una	Truth
Archimago	Hypocrisy
Sansfoy	Infidelity
Sansjoy	Joylessness
Sansloy	Lawlessness
Fidessa, Duessa	Falsehood
Lion	Strength, of mind only
Corceca	Blind Devotion
Abessa	Superstition
Kirkrapine	Plunder of the Church
Lucifera	Pride
Dwarfe	Prudence
Sir Satyrane	Natural, untrained Courage
Orgoglio	Carnal Pride
Dame Cælia	"Heavenly" Holiness
Fidelia	Faith
Speranza	Hope
Charissa	Charity
Dragon	Sin
Una's Parents	The World

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GLOSSARY

acquitt, released.
adamant, diamond, or any extremely hard substance.
addrest, equipped.
advaunce, extol.
afflicted, humble.
affray, terror.
affronted, confronted.
aghast, terrified.
agraste, showed grace.
albe, although.
all, although.
almner, almoner, distributer of alms.
als, also.
amain, violently.
amate, daunt.
amis, a priest's robe.
amounted, mounted (his horse).
amove, move.
apply, ply, attend to.
aread (areed), explain, declare, appoint.
arise, depart.
aslake, appease.
assay, assault, attempt; proof, value.
assoiled, absolved.
assynd, pointed out.
astond, confounded.
attaint, obscure.
avale, abate.
avise, perceive.
avizd, perceived.

bace, low.
bains, banns.
bait, harass.
bale, destruction, sorrow.
band, gather.
bastard, base.
bauldrick, belt.
bayes, bathes.
bed, bid.
behight, intrusted; was called.
behott, promised.
bestedd, situated.
bett, beaten.
bever, part of a helmet.
bewray, reveal.
bilive, quickly.
bits, food.
blaze, blazon forth.
blent, stained.
blesse, brandish.
blest, preserved.
blubbred, swollen with tears.
boss, knob.
boughtes, folds.
bouzing, drinking.
bownd, lead.
bowre, chamber, inner room.
bowrs, muscles.
boystrous, rough.
brand, sword.
brast, burst.
breares, briers.
brent, burnt.
buffe, blow.
bugle, wild ox.
buxome, yielding.
bylive, quickly.

call, headdress, cap.
can, did.
canon-bitt, a smooth round bit.
carefull, sorrowful, painful.
carke, grief, anxiety.
carle, churl.
cast, considered how.
caytive, captive.
chauffed (chauft), chafed.
chaw, jaw.
chayre, chariot.
chearen, be cheered.
cheere, countenance.
chosen, elected to be saved.
clarions, trumpets.
cleare, clean.
clene, pure.
closely, secretly.
clouts, pieces of cloth, patches.

commune, common.
compare, collect.
consort, company.
convaid, secretly carried off.
corage, heart.
corse, body.
couched, laid.
counterfesaunce, counterfeiting.
covetise, covetousness.
creast, crest.
croslet, small cross.
cruddy, curdy, clotted.
crudled, curdled.
cruel, keen.

damnifyde, injured.
darrayne, prepare, or fight out.
dazd, confounded, dazzled.
deare, sad, sore; injury.
deaw-burning, shining with dew.
debonaire, courteous.
decay, destruction.
deface, defeat.
defeasauance, defeat.
defould, treated with indignity.
defray, avert.
deryved, transferred.
descryde, made known.
devise, converse.
dew, due.
dight, furnished, adjusted, dressed.
dint, stroke.
disaventurous, unfortunate.
discolourd, variegated.
disgraste, degraded, enfeebled.
dismay, unnerve.
disple, discipline.
disseized, dispossessed.
dissolute, enervated.
distraine, rend.
dites, raises.
ditty, subject.
diverse, distracting.
divide, play.
documents, instructions.
doen, done.
dolours, griefs.
doome, judgment.
double, redoubled.
doubtfull, fearful.
dread (dreed), object of reverence.
drere, wretchedness.
dreriment, sorrow, gloom.
drest, disposed, prepared.
drift, onward rush.
droome, drum.
dye, chance.

earne, yearn.
earst, first, previously.
edifyde, built.
eeke, increase.
eft, again.
eftsoones, immediately.
eke, also.
eld, old age.
embard, confined.
embayd, bathed.
embosse, inclose.
embost, inclosed, encased, beset, surrounded.
embowd, arched.
emboyled, heated, scorched.
empassioned, moved.
empeach, hinder.
empeopled, collected together.
emprize, enterprise.
enfouldred, mixed with lightning.
enhance, adorn.
enhaunst, lifted up.
ensewen, follow.
entraile, coiling.
envy, emulate.
esloyne, withdraw.
essoyne, excuse.
eugh, yew.
ewghen, made of yew.
excheat, profit.
extirpe, extirpate.
eyas, young.

facts, feats, acts, deeds.
falsed, deceived.
faynd, disguised.
fayne, glad, gladly.
faytor, deceiver.
felly, cruelly.
fere, companion, husband.
file, smooth, polish.
fitt, strain, mood; blow.
flaggy, hanging loosely.
flitt, move, change.
flitting, yielding or light.
fond, foolish.
fone, foes.
food, anger.
foolhappie, happy-go-lucky.
fordone, undone.
foreby, near.
forged, false.
forlore, forlorn.
forlorne, abandoned.
forrayed, ravaged.
forsake, avoid.
forwasted, wasted.

forwearied, wearied out.
forworne, worn out.
fraight, freighted.
franclin, freeman, holder of land.
fray, frighten.
frounce, curl, frizzle.
fry, crowd.
funerall, death.

gage, object or prize of contest.
gall, anger.
gent, gentle, kind.
german, brother.
gest, deed.
gin, engine.
ginneth, beginneth.
giust, joust.
glee, pleasure.
gnarre, snarl.
good, courtesy due.
gorge, throat.
gossibs, gossips, friends.
grace, favor.
graile, gravel.
grate, stir.
gree, favor.
grenning, grinning.
griesie, greasy.
griple, grasping.
groome, servant.
grosse, heavy.
grudging, murmuring.
gryfon, griffin.
guise, custom, manner.

hable, able, real.
hagard, untrained.
handëling, conduct.
harbour, lodging.
hardiment, boldness.
harrowd, ravaged, subdued.
haught, high.
haughtie, high-tuned.
heastes, behests, commands.
heben, ebony.
hefte, raised.
hence, henceforth.
henge, hinge.
hight, intrusted ; was called.
horrid, rough.
hot, was called.
housling, sacramental.
hove, rise.
humblesse, humility, reverence.
hurtlen, rush, skirmish.
hurtlesse, innocent.
husher, usher.
hyre, recompense.

impe (ymp), child.
implyes, enwraps, enfolds.
importune, violent.
improvided, unforeseen.
in, abode.
incontinent, without delay.
intended, stretched out.
intendiment, consideration.
invent, find.

jolly, handsome.
jott, small piece.
journall, daily.

keepe, heed.
kend, known.
kest, cast.
kindly, natural.
kynd, nature.

laystall, dunghill.
leasing, lie.
leke, leaky.
leman, lady love, or lover.
let, hinder ; hindrance.
lever, rather.
libbard, leopard.
liefe, dear.
lilled, lolled.
lin, cease.
list, pleased.
lively, lifelike.
loft, roof, floor.
lompish, heavy.
longes, belongs.
lorne, deserted.
losse, destruction.
lout, bend.
louted, bowed.
lovely, loving, lovingly.
lustlesse, listless.
lust, desire, pleasure.

maine, force.
make, mate.
mall, club, blow.
many, multitude.
mated, dejected.
maw, stomach.
mayne, strength.
maynly, strongly.
mealt'h, melteth.
mell, meddle.
ment, mingled.
mew, den.
misseeming, deceptive, unseemly.
mister, manner, sort.
moe (mo), more.

mortall, deadly.
mote, may.
mould, form.
muchell, much.

name, celebrity.
neare, close.
nathëmore, not the more.
newphewes, descendants.
ni 'll, I will not.
noise, music.
note, know not.
n' ould, would not.
nousled, nursed.
noyd, annoyed.
noyous, baleful, irksome.

onely, chief.
origane, marjoram.
ought, owned.
over-all, everywhere.
overcraw, insult.
owches, jewels.

paine, service.
paire, impair.
parbreake, vomit.
pardale, panther.
pas, surpass.
passion, suffering, emotion.
passionate, express feelingly.
paynes, services.
pcece, fabric, structure.
pennes, feathers.
perdie, truly.
persaunt, piercing.
pight, fixed, placed.
pikehead, a flat, pointed head
place, rank.
plants, plaints.
plast, placed.
pleasaunce, pleasure.
point, whit.
points, appoints.
portesse, breviary.
posterne, door, or small gate.
poulderd, powdered.
pounces, claws.
poynant, piercing.
poyse, force.
practicke, deceitful.
prancke, adorn, adjust.
pray, pursuit; ravage.
preace, press, throng.
presage, point out.
presence, reception-room.
price, pay for.
pricking, riding fast.
priefe, tried; proof.
prime (pryme), spring-time.
prowest, bravest.
purchas, acquisition.
purfled, embroidered on the edge.
purposes, discourses.
purveyaunce, provision.
pyn'd, wasted.

quaile, defeat.
quayd, quelled.
quight, disengage, repay.
quited, requited.
quit (quitt), rescued.

raft, bereft.
raile, flow.
rare, strange.
raskall, low.
raught, reached.
ravine, prey.
read, advise.
reave, take away.
rebutte, recoil.
rebutted, caused to recoil.
reck, heed.
recoyle, retire.
recure, recover, refresh.
red (redd), known, perceived, called, declared.
redounding, overflowing.
redresse, put together again.
reed, perceive, imagine.
reliv'd, brought to life.
remorse, pity.
renverst, reversed.
repining, indignant.
repriefe, reproof.
retyrd, drawn.
reverse, cause to return.
riddes, dismisses.
rife, abundantly, unhindered.
rive, rend.
rode, roadstead, place of anchorage.
roome, place.
routes, rabble.
rove, shoot.
rowels, part of the canon-bit.
rownd, circular dance.
rudely, roughly.
ruffin, disordered.
rueth, grieves.
rush, fall.
ruth, pity, sorrow.

sacred, cursed.
sad, heavy, burdened, **grave.**
sam, together.

say, a thin, delicate serge.
scath, damage, loss, mischief.
scrip, small bag.
scryne, desk.
seard, scorched.
seare, burning.
seasd, fixed.
seene, proved, tried.
seised, reached.
seize, fasten.
sent, perception, senses.
severall, various.
share, slice.
shaumes, pipes.
shyne, light.
silly (seely), simple, rustic.
sith (sithens), since.
sits, is becoming, suits.
slake, slack.
slight, device.
slouth, sloth.
smouldry, smothering.
snub, knob.
solace, recreation.
souce, swoop, attack.
sownd, clash.
sowne, sound.
spent, worn out.
spersed, dispersed, diffused.
spies, glances.
spill, destroy.
squyre, esquire.
stadle, staff.
stedd (sted), place.
sterne, tail.
stile, pen.
stint, stop.
stole, a long robe.
stond, station.
stoond, stunned.
stound (stownd), moment, time; exigency.
stowre, distress, sorrow, peril.
stye, rise.
subject, lying beneath.
suffised, satisfied.
suitt, pursuit.
suppresst, overpowered.
sway, swing.
swayne, youth.
swelt, burned; spread.
swinged, singed.

table, picture.
talaunts, talons.
teade, torch.
teene, pain.
tenor, voice.
then, than.
thewes, manners.
tho, then.
thralles, slaves.
three-square, triangular.
thrill, pierce.
thrillant, piercing, sharp.
thristed, thirsted.
throw, throe.
tide, season, while.
tire, attire, train.
told, counted.
tort, wrong.
touch, touchstone.
tract, tracing.
transmew, transform.
traynes, snares, deceits.
treachour, traitor.
trenchand, cutting.
trompets, trumpets.
trusse, hold firmly.
tway, twain.
tyne, grief, pain.
tyre, diadem; dress.

unbid, without a prayer.
uncouth, unknown, strange.
undight, unloosed, undid.
uneath, scarcely.
unkindly, unnatural.
untill, unto.
unwary, unexpected.
unweeting, unknowing.
uptyes, ties up.

vaine, false.
venery, hunting.
vere, change the direction of.
vewen, view.
visour, headpiece used for disguise.

wage, pledge, prize.
walks, revolves.
ware, cautious.
warrayd, made war upon.
wayne, chariot.
weeds, garments.
ween, think, suppose, expect.
weet, learn, know.
weld, wield, turn.
welke, wane.
well, well-being.
whereas, where.
whether, which of two.
whiles, meanwhile.
whott, hot.
whyleare, not long ago.
whylome, formerly.

wight, man.
wimple, veil.
wimpled, drawn into folds.
wisard, wise man.
wonne, dwell.
wood, mad.
wote, know, deem.
wreakes, acts of vengeance.
wrestes, wrists.
wyde, out of the way.

yblent, blinded.
ycladd, clad.
ydrad, dreaded.
yede, go.
yfed, fed, refreshed.
yfere, together.
yod, went.
yplaste, reduced.
yrent, rent.
yts, it is.

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